



Additional Learning Needs

KATIE GARDNER

Today's Lecture Outcomes

- Introduction to module
- Introduce and discuss Module Assessment
- Define disability and ALN
- Define equality, equity and intersectionality

Module Aims

- To develop an understanding of the principles of inclusive practice within the PCET classroom

Module Learning Outcomes

- Upon the successful completion of this module, the student should be able to:
- Identify and critically discuss key features and associated characteristics of a range of diagnosed impairments
- Identify and evaluate strategies to meet the needs of learners with additional learning needs within the PCET learning setting

Indicative content

- Additional learning needs, policy and statutory guidelines
- Differentiation and accommodating needs within the PCET classroom
- Teaching strategies and design of learning for ALN
- Compensatory measures and the role of student support services
- Person centered practice
- Mental well-being
- Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act and its implications for PCET practitioners and settings

What to expect

WEEK 1 - 3

Date/who	Focus	Pre-sessional activity
16.02.26 Katie	Library talk Introduction to module Module Assessment What is ALN	
23.02.26 Katie	Legal requirements of ALN Policy and Legislation	ALN transform
02.03.26 Katie	Anti-hate Anti-racist Unconscious Bias	How can we become anti-racist? A guide Advance HE Writing about ethnicity - GOV.UK

What to expect

WEEK 4 AND 5

Date/who	Focus	Pre-sessional activity
09.03.26 Katie	Models of Disability Developing your classroom to be inclusive	Models of disability: A brief overview - ProQuest – Read understanding and supporting experiences of disabled students - QAA podcast equality and diversity for academics inclusive practice equality and diversity for academics legal framework
16.03.26 Katie	Mental health and wellbeing Pastoral Support	understanding and supporting the experiences of disabled students podcast - QAA equality and diversity for academics inclusive practice equality and diversity for academics legal framework equality and diversity for academics pastoral care

Assignment

- Due – 27.03.2026 at 23.59
- Feedback – 15.05.2026 at 15.00
- Part 1
- 1000 words
- Part 2
- 500 words per scenario

Assignment: Part 1- learning support report

- 1000 words
- Students will be required to produce a 1000-word summary demonstrating their understanding of regulatory and legal requirements in accommodating additional requirements and demonstrating inclusivity within the post-compulsory classroom. Students will need to draw upon relevant policy (both institutional and national) as well as relevant legislation such as (but not limited to) the Equality Act (2010), all of which should be accurately referenced within the work. This part of the assignment should be considered as an academic piece of writing, and therefore written and presented as such.

Assignment: Part 2- support statement

- You are employed as a teacher within a post-16 setting of your choosing. You have received the information below regarding six individuals who may need additional support with their studies. You will need to provide a support statement for three of the six individuals outlining how their support requirements may impact on their ability to engage with their programme of study as well as indicating the measures that you would put in place to accommodate them within the identified setting.
- Whilst constructing your response to the scenarios below you will need to carefully consider the following:

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- What is the education setting you have chosen? This could be a current placement or an intended location. Please be specific and include the subject area you will be teaching also as this can impact on your response to the scenarios.
 - You will need to be familiar with the current processes and policies in place within your chosen setting that are used to support learners with additional support requirements. This may involve familiarising yourself with student services departments (or equivalent) and what they do.
 - In detailing your response to the scenarios ensure you consider the institutional requirements and processes as well as the programme specific response i.e., think about the day-to-day measures needed to ensure these students are included within the learning offered.

Rhys / Angharad

- Rhys is a second year student who has come to you to explain that they have been struggling to concentrate on work this year, their grades have been dropping and they are finding the work and social side of post 16 education hard. They tell you that they feel like an outsider and different. Rhys explains to you that they have always felt different and that they think they are trans. They have never said this to anyone before and don't know what to do. In private Rhys has been experimenting with their clothes, make-up and their name. Rhys would like to transition, but is scared and wants some support and advice. They have not told their family about any of this. They are worried about what their fellow students and other lecturers will say. Rhys would like to be called Angharad from now on.

Iwan

- Iwan has been studying with you since the beginning of term, he has been struggling with finances and is worried about his studies. Iwan explains that he comes from a deprived area of Wales and is the first person from his family to study in the post compulsory sector. He has spoken to his parents but they are not able to help him any more with money as they are struggling themselves. Iwan has a part time job but this still does not cover all of his outgoings. He has been offered more work but is worried that this will impact his study further, he is already falling behind.

Efa

- Efa is a first year student who emailed you as she is considering leaving the course. In her email she has said that she feels like an outcast and ostracised because of her race. There are students and lecturers who constantly tell her they can't understand what she's saying and then dismiss her and her points of discussion, there have been a number of offensive comments made about her appearance by other students that, when challenged other students, and some lecturers, have justified them as 'jokes' or 'banter'. When she has attempted to speak up, her challenge has been treated with a lack of empathy and understanding. Efa generally feels that people would prefer not to talk to me or to sit with her which means she is often sat on her own in lectures and at breaks. Efa also feels that she needs to work extra hard and be extra friendly in order to get on in lessons, especially in group tasks.

Megan

- Megan has applied to study your programme during the next academic year and has declared mental health support needs although she does not have an official diagnosis. She has attended an interview and has outlined that she struggles with speaking up in class as she suffers with anxiety issues and has done since childhood and finds it difficult mixing with new people. Megan has also advised that during her school studies she often found it hard to concentrate in class and wasn't always able to maintain attention on the information being presented during taught sessions and is worried about this for his new programme and tells you that her previous tutors commented that she may have dyslexia.

Dafydd

- Dafydd has applied to study your programme during the next academic year. He has cerebral palsy and is partially sighted although is not registered as blind. He is able to walk independently with the use of crutches. Dafydd gets tired easily and uses a computer within class although he does find notetaking difficult due to his typing speed and he does struggle with use of his left arm at times. Dafydd states that he has always been very independent in managing his education and although he is moving away from home to attend your programme, he is keen to maintain that independence. He has asked for your advice on the options open to him as a student with you.

Alys

- Alys is a second-year student on your course and has begun the new academic year and has discovered that she is pregnant. She has indicated that she wants to continue to study her studies as much as she is able to and has asked for her options in supporting her to do this during her pregnancy as well as after the birth.

Disability



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- What's the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word disability?
 - Add as many words as you like, and we will make up a word cloud
 - Join at: vevox.app
 - ID: 136-431-817

What is disability? (5 minutes)

- Without your phone or computer produce a definition of disability on your table.
- What does it include and what doesn't it?
- Share your definitions with the group
- Is it easy to define disability?

Equalities Act 2010

- You're disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.
- What do you think substantial means?
- What do you think long term means?
- What does a 'progressive' illness mean?

Substantial -

- A substantial adverse effect is something that is more than minor or trivial and goes beyond the normal differences in ability which may exist between people
- more than minor or trivial
- e.g. it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed

Long term

- An illness
- which has lasted at least 12 months; or
- where the total period for which it lasts is likely to be at least 12 months; or
- which is likely to last for the rest of your life.
- e.g. a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection

Progressive conditions

- A progressive condition is one that gets worse over time.
- People with progressive conditions can be classed as disabled.
- However, you automatically meet the disability definition under the Equality Act 2010 from the day you're diagnosed with:
 - HIV infection,
 - cancer or
 - multiple sclerosis.

What is Physical or Mental Impairment?

- Physical impairments, such as mobility difficulties
- Sensory impairments such as those affecting hearing or sight
- Learning difficulties, including people with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and dyspraxia
- Mental health conditions or illnesses which have a long-term effect such as depression and anxiety, panic attacks, phobias, eating disorders, obsessive compulsive disorders, schizophrenia and bipolar affective disorder
- Hidden impairments such as asthma or diabetes, if these have an effect on your day-to-day activities

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- Genetic and progressive conditions, if the condition affects your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities such as motor neurone disease, muscular dystrophy
 - Conditions which are characterised by several cumulative effects such as pain or fatigue
 - There is no need for you to have a medically diagnosed cause for your impairment. What matters is the effect of the impairment on you.
 - Remember- many disabilities are not visible!
 - Past history of impairment - this applies if you are no longer disabled but met the definition in the past.

Barriers to consider

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE BARRIERS FACED BY PEOPLE WHO ARE CONSIDERED AS DISABLED?

- Physical Barriers
- Communication Barriers
- Environmental Barriers (including transport)
- Social Barriers
- Economic inequalities?
- Educational inequalities
- Unequal Access to Services
- Unequal Service Provision
- Unequal Representation
- Attitudinal Barriers
- Disablism (Ableism)

Activity (10 mins)

- In groups discuss which of these barriers might affect PCET students
- How?
- Feedback to group

Additional Learning Needs

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- What is your definition of ALN?
 - What comes under ALN?

Language/abbreviations used

- ALN
- Additional Learning Need
- SpLD
- Specific Learning Difficulties
- AS
- Autistic Spectrum
- SEN
- Special Educational Needs
- EHCP
- Education and Health Care Plan
- HI
- Hearing Impaired
- ABI
- Acquired Brain Injury
- SLCD
- Speech, Language and Communication Difficulties

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- DP
 - Disabled Person
 - APD
 - Auditory Processing Disorder
 - LD
 - Severe Learning Disabilities
 - ALNCO
 - Additional Learning Needs Co-ordinator

- SEMH
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- DSA
- Disabled Students Allowance
- ALNP (PEP)
- Additional Learning Needs Plan (Personal Education Plan)
- MLD
- Moderate Learning Difficulties

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- ADHD
 - Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
 - SEND
 - Special Educational Needs and Disability
 - SLCN
 - Speech, Language and Communication Needs

- LDD
- Learning Disability and Difficulty
- VI
- Visually Impaired
- DP (money)
- Direct Payments
- CAMHS
- Child Adult Mental Health Service

Definition ALN – Welsh Assembly Government (WAG)

- 1. A person has additional learning needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability (whether the learning difficulty or disability arises from a medical condition or otherwise) which calls for additional learning provision.
- 2. A child of compulsory school age or person over that age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she
 - (a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
 - (b) has a disability for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities for education or training of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream maintained schools or mainstream institutions in the further education sector.

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- 3. A child under compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she is, or would be if no additional learning provision were made, likely to be within subsection (2) when of compulsory school age.
 - 4. A person does not have a learning difficulty or disability solely because the language (or form of language) in which he or she is or will be taught is different from a language (or form of language) which is or has been used at home
 - For more information: <https://www.gov.wales/additional-learning-needs-code>

Education- Specific Learning Disabilities (SpLDs)

- Dyslexia –
 - mainly affects reading and occurs in 5-10% of the population. It runs in families and has a significant heritable component.
- Dyspraxia –
 - mainly affects motor skills, motor planning and co-ordination. It is thought to affect up to 10% of the population (2% severely)
- Dyscalculia –
 - number dyslexia. It occurs in approximately 6% of the population

Specific Learning Disabilities

- Dysgraphia –
 - mainly affects writing. There are few statistics available but it is estimated anywhere between 5% and 20% of students affected (prevalence decreases with age)
- Dysnomia –
 - difficulty in recalling words. This is under- researched and often mis-diagnosed or not individually recognised.
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
 - has been accepted as a disorder by the NHS since 2009. Affects between 2% and 5% of school children are thought to have this as well as 3% to 4% of adults

In a bit more detail...

THERE MIGHT BE SOME THINGS SAID HERE THAT RESONATE WITH
PEOPLE – LOOK AFTER YOURSELF BUT ALSO FEED IN IF YOU FEEL YOU
CAN

Dyslexia

- Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling.

• (British Dyslexia Association, 2018)
- A continuum of difficulties in learning to read, write and/or spell, which persist despite the provision of appropriate learning opportunities. These difficulties often do not reflect an individual's cognitive abilities and may not be typical of performance in other areas. (Dyslexia Scotland, 2017)
- As with other disabilities it is covered by the Equality Act (2010)

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- Dyslexia is a learning difference which primarily affects reading and writing skills. However, it does not only affect these skills.
 - Dyslexia is actually about information processing.
 - Dyslexic people may have difficulty processing and remembering information they see and hear, which can affect learning and the acquisition of literacy skills.
 - Dyslexia can also impact on other areas such as organisational skills.
 - It is important to remember that there are positives to thinking differently. Many dyslexic people show strengths in areas such as reasoning and in visual and creative fields
- (BDA, 2020)

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

- A condition that affects people's behaviour. People with ADHD can seem restless, may have trouble concentrating and may act on impulse
- Symptoms of ADHD tend to be noticed at an early age and may become more noticeable when a child's circumstances change, such as when they start school.
- Most cases are diagnosed when children are 6 to 12 years old.
- The symptoms of ADHD usually improve with age, but many adults who were diagnosed with the condition at a young age continue to experience problems.
- People with ADHD may also have additional problems, such as sleep and anxiety disorders.

(NHS 2018)

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- The cause of ADHD has not been determined but it is shown to run in families although factors may contribute including...
 - being born prematurely (before the 37th week of pregnancy)
 - having a low birthweight
 - smoking or alcohol or drug abuse during pregnancy
 - ADHD can occur in people of any intellectual ability

(NHS 2018)

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- Support (educational and behavioural as well as medication) can allow this condition to be managed in children in most cases.
 - If undiagnosed in children can lead to further problems
 - Although symptoms generally improve with age, adults may have ADHD that was not diagnosed in childhood, and this may lead to relationship and social issues.
 - There is a view that ADHD is being over diagnosed, although not accepted by medical and education establishments

Interesting read

- [What is ADHD, how do you get a diagnosis and can you only treat it with drugs? All your questions, answered by experts | Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder | The Guardian](#)

Autistic Spectrum (AS)

- AS is based on the identification of the pattern of behaviours characteristic of autism. These behaviours must occur in the requisite intensity and frequency to disrupt social and occupational functioning. AS remains a behavioural diagnosis. There has been no identified biological mechanism, such as a blood test or scan, to identify autism
- Represents a different way of being-in-the-world that is part of human neurodiversity.

(Cashin p.IX)

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- There is wide consensus that autism is the result of biological differences and is genetically mediated, even though the exact nature of the difference remains to be identified
 - Autism is heritable, in that the prevalence of AS is higher in siblings of people with AS than in the general population.

(Cashin p.IX)

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- Students can have difficulty in communication, social interaction and imagination.
 - May be easily distracted or upset by certain stimuli
 - May have problems with change in routine
 - May have difficulties with co-ordination and/or fine motor skills
 - Most students who hold a EHCP have autism as the most common need
 - May have a 'special interest'
 - Might have high IQ

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- The structures of society are built upon the assumptions embedded in typical thinking – so what?
 - There can be a clash between the needs of people with AS and the assumptions on which the very structures within which they function are based.
 - For a person with AS if work or study involves an intense interest or obsession, they are likely to demonstrate great persistence and determination in carrying out the task or the learning
 - success stories of the application of the associated traits of the AS thinking style to success in work or study, these remain in the minority.
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Moderate Learning Disability

- Definition: Students will have attainments significantly below expected levels in most areas of the curriculum, despite appropriate interventions. Their needs will not be able to be met by normal differentiation and the flexibilities of the National Curriculum.
- have much greater difficulty than their peers in acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills and in understanding concepts.
- may also have associated speech and language delay, low self-esteem, low levels of concentration and under-developed social skills

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- is not implied that the low attainment is the fault of the school (college or university), for example because the school has not been providing suitable interventions. However, neither does the definition imply that the school can be complacent and assume that it cannot do more.

(Farrell p. 13-4)

Activity

- In groups discuss if these additional needs might affect PCET students
- How?
- Why?
- What is the impact on you as an educator?
- What teaching strategies can you think of which would meet the needs of an ALN student in your classroom?
- Feedback to group

What do disabled students say...

Next Steps: What is the experience of disabled students in Education?

UCAS 2022

What students are looking forward to – expectations of HE

Many respondents shared positive expectations for HE, and felt a clear sense of hopefulness for this new chapter in their lives. Universities and colleges are seen as diverse and inclusive environments, and applicants expect them to have established policies and procedures in place to support disabled students. In fact, their expectations for support in HE exceed their satisfaction with their experiences in school or college so far:



Nearly two thirds (65%) believe the general support will be 'excellent' or 'good'



Over three in five (61%) expect the educational support to be 'excellent' or 'good'



Over half (53%) expect the facilities to be 'excellent' or 'good'



44% expect the social aspects to be 'excellent' or 'good'



43% are looking forward to the curriculum

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- Student expectation about support in HE and college is a complex issue;
 - young people moving from secondary to tertiary education may not always be fully aware of the various mechanisms that have been working to support them, meaning they may be unable to fully articulate their support requirements.
 - Similarly, teachers and advisers in secondary education may lack knowledge about support in universities and colleges, so may not be able to fully support disabled applicants in this aspect of their decision making.

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- So, while the proportion of students expecting support in HE to be 'excellent' or 'good' appears to be reassuring, it may not take account of individuals' understanding of what they will receive, which could be unrealistic.

(UCAS p.25)

What support disabled students expect...

Of those who researched support for disabled students before making their application:



Almost half (45%) looked at **general support**.

- > highest for those with two or more impairments (62%)
- > lowest for those with long-term illnesses or health conditions (37%)



Over a third (36%) researched **educational support**.

- > highest for those with visual impairments (51%)
- > lowest for those with long-term illnesses or health conditions (20%)



16% researched **facilities** and **physical adjustments** to campus.

- > highest for those with physical impairments or challenges with mobility (34%)
- > lowest for those with learning differences (10%)

What disabled students look for...



Applicants with physical impairments or challenges with mobility were most likely to prioritise **accessible campus facilities** (69%) and **accessible accommodation** (67%)



Mentoring was prioritised most by those with two or more impairments (59%) and learning differences (52%)



Applicants with two or more impairments, and those with social, behavioural or communication impairments, were most likely to **prioritise mental health support services** (80%)



Applicants with visual impairments were the most likely to prioritise **sports clubs and facilities** for disabled students (48%)



Learning support services were more likely to be prioritised by those with visual impairments (80%), two or more impairments (76%), and learning differences (69%)



Applicants with long-term illnesses or health conditions were the most likely to prioritise **on-campus GP facilities** (54%).

What does all this mean for us?

- In groups discuss the implications of the expectations of disabled students on the PCET educator.
- What can we do to support students?
- Why is it important?

Its getting better...

- number of accepted UK applicants sharing a disability increased to 103,000 in 2023, up from 77,000 in 2022
- Those sharing a mental health condition rose to 36,000 this year compared to 22,000 last year (+63.6%) and 16,000 in 2019 (+125%)
- figures show growing numbers of students feel comfortable in sharing a disability or mental health condition as part of their UCAS application
- ([Highest number of students sharing disability and mental health conditions secure place at university | Undergraduate | UCAS](#))

Equality, equity and intersectionality

Definitions

- Equality
- What does the word equality mean to you?
- Add on the word cloud the words, or phrases that come to mind:
- Join at: vevox.com
- ID: 136-431-817



Equality

- The state of being equal.
- It's one of the ideals of a democratic society.
- The fight to attain different kinds of equality, like racial equality, gender equality, or equality of opportunity between rich and poor, is often associated with progress toward the ideal of everyone being truly equal
- Equality is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents.
- It is also the belief that no one should have poorer life chances because of the way they were born, where they come from, what they believe, or whether they have a disability

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- Equality recognises that historically certain groups of people with protected characteristics such as race, disability, sex and sexual orientation have experienced discrimination

(Equality and Human Rights Commission)

Equality: the Historical Debate

- Equality of opportunity
- Refers to the chance of obtaining society's rewards on the basis of merit rather than social advantage (e.g. education, wealth)
- Inequality of opportunity
- Unequal access to society's rewards due to social background (e.g. poverty, race, gender)
- Equality of condition
- Equal access to society's rewards irrespective of either merit or social background

Walsh, Stevens & Moore, 2000, P. 62)



Equity

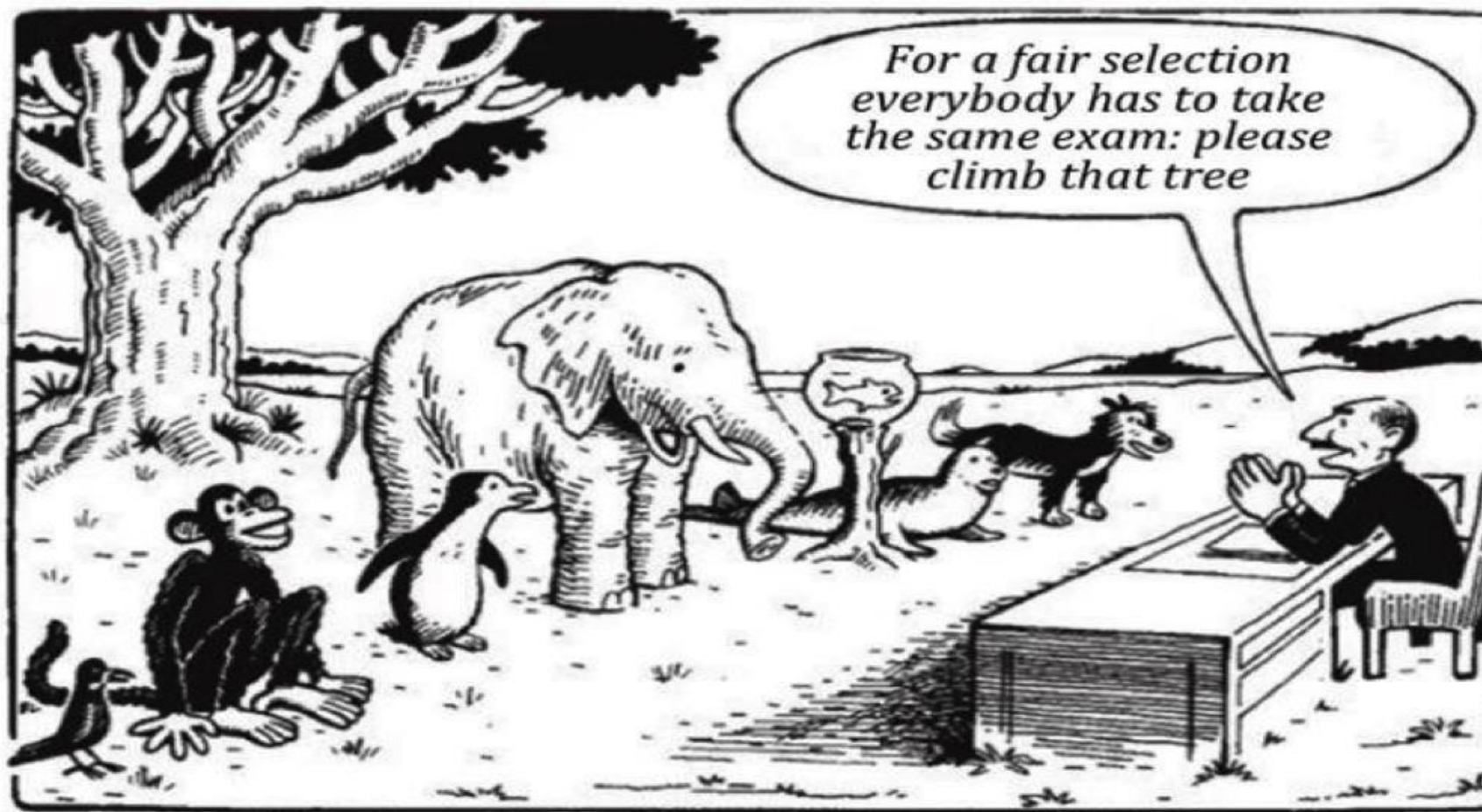
- So if equality is treating everyone the same...
- What is equity?
- Join at: vevox.app
- ID: 136-431-817

Equity

- Equity is about giving people what they need, in order to make things fair.
- Giving more to those who need it
- Can you give examples of this in PCET education?

Equality vs. Equity

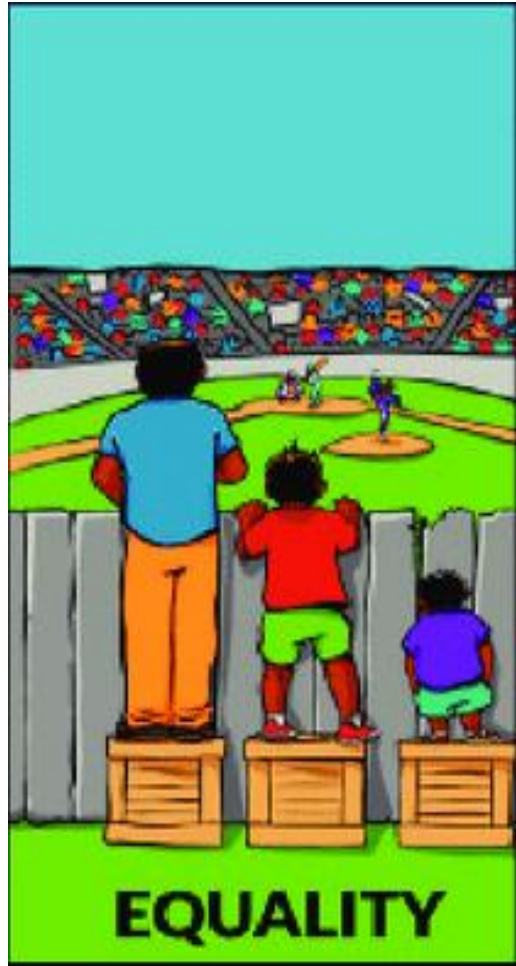
- <https://sputniksteve.wordpress.com/2019/03/28/climb-that-tree-differentiating-differentiation/>



Our Education System

"Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid."

- Albert Einstein



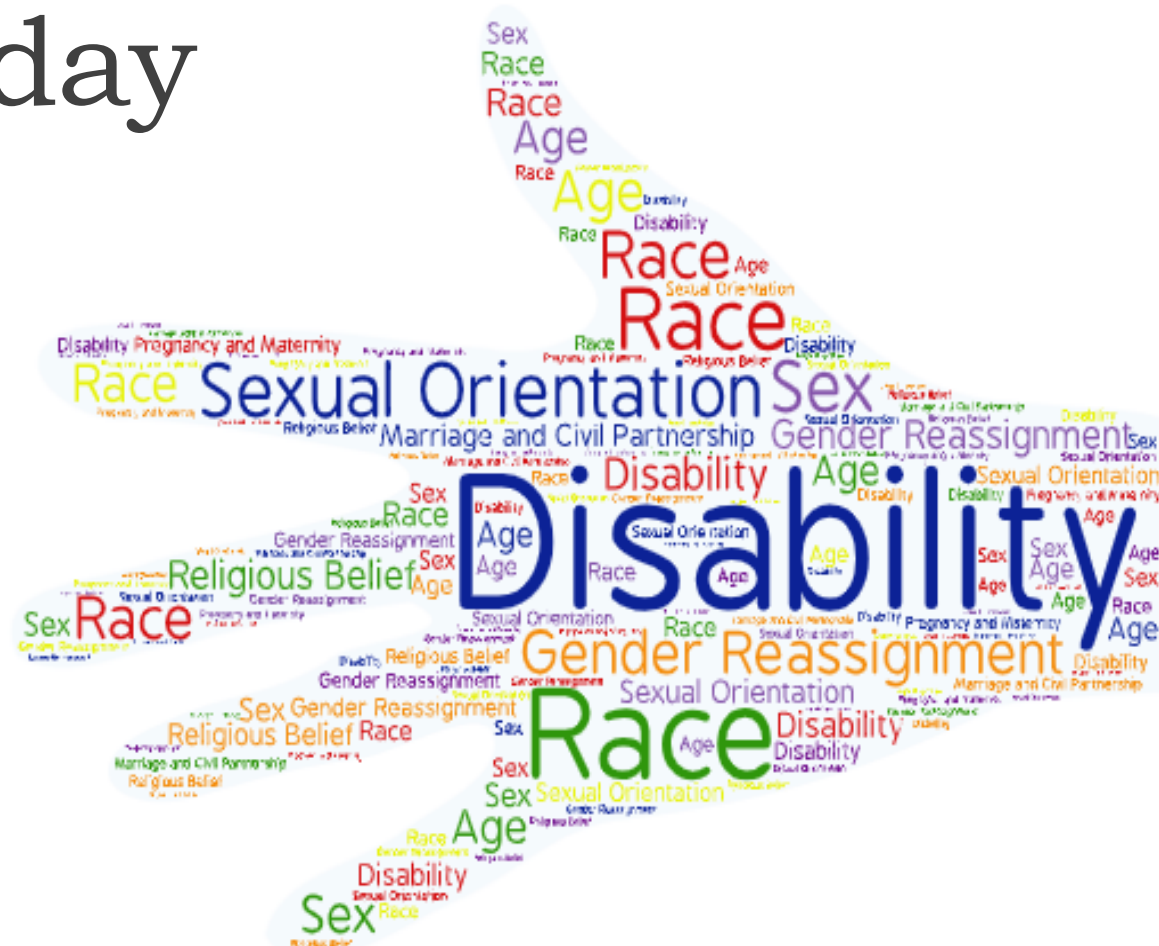
Intersectionality

- Intersectionality is a term used that describes the lived experiences of people that recognises the complexities of today's society and the people who live in it.
- It recognises that people are not one specific protected characteristic as described in the equalities act, but that as an individual you may fit into two or more of these categories
- As a result you may be discriminated against, experience inequality or be marginalised because of one or more of them.

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- ‘when it comes to social inequality, peoples lives and the organization of power in a given society are better understood as being shaped not by a single axis... but by many axes that work together and influence each other’

(Collins and Bilge 2016, p. 2)

Intersectionality today



Today's Lecture Outcomes

- Introduction to module
- Introduce and discuss Module Assessment including use of AI guidance
- Define disability and ALN
- Define equality, equity and intersectionality

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