

## Inclusive education

### Introduction to inclusive education

#### Outcome for this theme:

Students as learners should effectively demonstrate their understanding of & insight into the field of study of this mod: inclusive ed with focus on learners who experience barriers2L (e.g. impairments, emotional problems, behavioural problems, learning difficulties & developmental problems)

+ the implementation of/responding to) the inclusive ed policy in your phase of specialisation.

#### Assessment criteria

In exam students should show evidence of understanding & insight of the ff. aspects of inclusive Ed.

& demonstrate that they can critically assess these aspects of inclusive ED.

& be able to respond to the challenges thereof:

#### \$ The meaning of concepts relevant to the theme (knowledge of what):

- special ED. & special educational needs versus barriers2L
- Integration, normalisation, mainstreaming (to be able to discuss the progress towards inclusive ed.)
- quality ED. for all (know the principles on which inclusive ED. is based)
- inclusive education

#### ❖ CONCEPT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION:

- o # - In your specific phase of specialisation (Intermediate & Senior phase): the **learners** are learners who experience **barriers** i.e. (“...obstacles or set of circumstances that ...prevents communication & bars access to advancement to learning ...” [Prinsloo in Landsberg 2005:27]).
- o Sometimes barriers arise in the centre of learning, the education system as a whole (including all the various educational levels), within the wider context (society/community)
- o or within the learner himself or herself which prevent both learner needs & system needs from being met.
- o #These barriers may manifest as impairments (sensory, physical, intellectual & other impairments, e.g. autism or chronic illnesses), behavioural problems (challenging behaviour), social-emotional problems, learning difficulties & developmental delays.

#### ❖ BROAD PRINCIPLES for ALL VARIETIES OF INCLUSION,

- o A dedication to building a more democratic society.
- o A dedication to building a more equitable & quality education for all system.
- o A belief that extends the responsibilities of regular schools (and also the other educational settings such as the Full-service & Special schools) to accommodate the diverse learning needs of *all* learners according to the level of support they needed.
- o A dedication that *all* learners can learn & need support.

The preferred name of this field of study. : Recently

#### ❖ THE TERM “INCLUSIVE EDUCATION” HAS SUPERSEDED “SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION”

There are different interpretations of the concept *inclusive education* & diverse ways of implementing it in different contexts, but **Inclusive education implies a very specific unconditional attitude / values towards the norms or criteria society uses when**

assessing the worth of a human being (not a value-judgement) because it presumes a warm embracing attitude towards all human beings, thus a live-and-let-live approach towards all with an acceptance of the differences (diversity), an acceptance of a person as "he is".

- ❖ In the content of this module see these three components, **knowledge, skills & attitudes/ values** as **interrelated**, as is evident from the fact that attitudes can be determined or changed by knowledge & that skill in a **particular field** requires **knowledge of the content in addition to practice**. Always bear in mind that they have an impact on one another & are embedded in the various roles of the educators.

- **inclusive ED. system**

- **learners who experience barriers2L ("barriers"; "barriers2L" & "learners who experience barriers2L" in your specific phase)**

- ❖ *Leaders of early care & education programs must have the ability & skill to help people understand & appreciate the value of different perspectives.* (Bloom 2006 <http://cecl.nl.edu>)

- ❖ *A learning conversation begins with a premises that we each have something to gain from hearing the other's opinions on an issue. It is only through a learning conversation that we can really understand someone's intent*

- ❖ The field of specialisation Inclusive education: Barriers to learning in this module is a controversial issue in South Africa. Many people see it as a political ploy, while others think it will not work at all because we do not have the resources in South Africa to address all the barriers to learning. Our meta-approach is based on an adaptation of some of the principles of the general systems, ecological theories & systemic thinking. From this perspective the different levels of systems in the whole social context influence one another in a continuous process of dynamic balance & interplay (Engelbrecht et al 2007:4). In this module inclusive education & the development towards inclusive education will be understood through critical analysis & synthesis of the **context** or systems (therefore also the social context) with a policy that will serve a diversity of learners in South Africa & will provide all of them with quality education

**\$ The transformation towards inclusive ed/the developmnt of inclusive ed. that has occurred since the Salamanca Conference in 1994 up to the publication of ED. White Paper 6 in July 2001 in South Africa & the most recent ed. documents (The 2008 SIAS document) (Knowledge of HOW?).**

**The following is included:**

- **the theoretical perspectives: medical versus the social or systemic perspective**
- **a new framework for inclusive ED. (from special educational needs [the old medical way of thinking], to the ED. for all approach & principles, towards inclusive ed (the new social-model or systemic perspective or way of thinking)**
- **inclusive ED. in action in South Africa**

**□ Focus on the international trends on inclusion.**

The main thrust ( reasons) behind the new inclusive ed. approach entails the ff:

- . **international & national trends, statements & policies** (Dyson& Forlin inEngelbrecht et al 2007:24-40)
- . **the conviction that all learners can learn & need support**

- . the convictions that all learners have the right to enjoy equal access & quality education (excellence) in sites of learning that best suit their needs.
- . acknowledging the diverse needs of the learning population
- . the principles of inclusion, such as respect for human dignity (Naicker in Engelbrecht et al 2007:14; 2007: 24-28); Dyson & Forlin in Engelbrecht et al 2007:Swart & Pettipher in Landsberg 2005:15-21)
- . Recognition of principle that every learner should have opportunity to build his/her own unique strengths.
- . the point of view that sees the learner at the centre of the teaching & learning process
- . the recognition that barriers to learning can arise at any level of the system (school, education system & the wider context (social [including the parents], economic & political) (Naicker in Engelbrecht et al 2007:19)

The inclusive policy accepted in South Africa (Tut 502).

**IMPLICATIONS OR BENEFITS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: RR I CAE POORED SLIP  
Cacomconci icds**

- Respects the human rights of all learners to an education.
- Realises the principles of the education-for-all approach.
- Recognise each learners uniqueness & build on providing different learning needs for diversity
- Is dedicated to ensure that all learners are empowered to become caring, competent & contributing citizens in an inclusive, changing & diverse society (Engelbrecht et al 2007:6).
- Centre of the teaching & learning process is the learner.
- Acknowledges that all learners can learn -- the focus is on the abilities & strengths of the learners.
- Enables learners to achieve academic excellence (thus quality education).
- Potential to be fully reached by developing system that has to adapt & make it possible for each learner to reach his or her full potential.
- Overcoming barriers is the focus of system so as to provide & meet full range of needs for all learners.
- Opportunities created for learners to learn from one another
- Recognises that barriers to learning can arise at any level of the system.
- Eradicate specific attitudes regarding the norms or criteria which society uses when evaluating the worth of a human being (not a value judgement)
- Develops a system that could cater for different levels of support to suit the diverse needs of all learners (i.e. an inclusive community & education system).
- Support for all learners need must be forwarded.
- Live-and-let-live approach towards all is implied
- Including those who were previously excluded, unconditionally
- presupposes a warm & embracing attitude towards all human beings
- Has to do with specific value systems that form the basis of the “social-critical” philosophy.

**Hence this is a new paradigm & it presumes a total & radical mind switch based on specific value systems & provides a basis for a systematic plan of action to reach its goals, namely to fight all forms of exclusion in society. It does the following:**

- Focuses on the learning context.
- Is included in revised curriculum 2005.
- Is related to outcomes based education.
- Based on principles such as human dignity, human rights, equality, quality (excellence), lifelong learning.

- Emphasises the needs of the individual & the system needs (refer to the concept *special needs*).
- Addresses causes of barriers to learning, overcoming of the barriers; barrier-free context; prevention.
- Includes curriculum-related issues namely the content; learner support & assessment.

**§ The framework for establishing an inclusive ED. system in South Africa, like the ED. support network services (district-based support) & provision for ED. (regular schls, special schls & full service schools).**

### **SPECIAL SCHOOLS AS RESOURCE CENTRES**

In order to ensure that the barriers to learning of all learners are met, there should be learning contexts which provide specialised teaching & support for those learners who require a high intensity level of support. Such learners may require specialised teaching & support as a result of the nature & extent of their impairments or because they are in trouble with the law & have been remanded into the custodial care of a particular institution.

The special school has a very important role to play.

short term: 30 special schools to be converted into resource schls in 30 selected districts all over country.

In the long term: 380 special schls will function as resource schls

### **SPECIAL SCHOOLS WILL DO THE FOLLOWING: *HonEd FDibs HenF Rest***

- ONLY provide education services to learners who require intense /high levels of support (e.g. previously known as learners with severe & multiple disabilities).=
- NOT to accomodate learners who require much less support & should ideally be in mainstream classes.
- Extend their services beyond the classroom to other schools in the district.
- Function as part of the district-based support team to help & assist neighbourhood schools, especially the full-service schools.
- Receive staff training for their new roles.

### **10.36 FULL-SERVICE SCHOOLS**

- Full-service schools will be “ordinary” primary schools identified by the Department of Education & converted into schools which welcome ALL children & provide a full range of support. The establishment of these schools will be a first step to providing support closer to home.

The vision is to transform approximately 30 of the 20 000 mainstream primary schools into full-service schools (2001 - 2003) which will serve as models for more such schools (500) in future (2004 - 2009 - 2021).

#### **The following story of Susan & Ansuja illustrates how the district-based support team & the full-service school can work together in the new system.**

*Susan & Ansuja are two friends who had previously attended a special school. Susan is partially sighted & Ansuja is physically impaired (wheelchair user). Susan had been in a hostel & Ansuja had to travel by bus every morning to the special school. Now they both live around the corner from the school that has recently been designated to provide a full range of support & can go there by using public transport, the wheelchair & the assistance of school friends.*

*The school that they have just joined is the full-service school in the area. They are apprehensive about how they will be received but enjoy the idea that they will be going to school with their siblings. To prepare the school for their arrival a district-based support team was formed & one of the good & experienced teachers of the nearby special school was appointed as a district support team member. She assisted the school by talking to the*

teachers about adapting learning material for Susan (e.g. bigger print) & organising their classes in such a way that both girls could participate in the group work. She also gave some advice to Susan & her teachers about phoning home or involving her mother if needed. The circuit manager of the school arranged the ramps & the widening of some doorways. The principal arranged for some children/buddies would welcome the two girls on their first day & show them around the school. In advance she also spoke to the staff about the two new learners & in her talk to the staff she pointed out that, in many ways, teachers already have learners experiencing barriers to learning in their school. Thus, by accommodating & adapting teaching for these learners, educators could ensure that all the children would therefore benefit. She explained about the support team & its role & how they'd liaise with the staff.

### **10.37 LEARNING SUPPORT: Learning support was previously known as Assistance or Remedial Education or Special Education.**

□ The intensity level of support is very important. Contrasting learning support with remedial education highlights the shift of focus endorsed in addressing barriers to learning, & the frame of inclusive education adds to our understanding of the context & strategy of intervention. **Remedial education conventionally adheres to the medical model of diagnosis & treatment, which is becoming increasingly outdated among the caring professions** as they address the barriers learners are experiencing. **The remedial approach to educational intervention is a problem-centred, needs-based approach to learning.** The remedial approach holds a real danger of categorising & labelling the learner in terms of gross emphasis of the impairment or problem area. The aim of the remedial specialist is generally to “rectify” (remedied) the learner’s “deficits” or “shortcomings” or even “failings” & to “accelerate” the learners development. So the focus during “therapy” is very much on addressing the specific problem or weaknesses “in” the learner as stated in the “diagnosis” Progress is frequently measured quantitatively -- in terms of more deficit-specific tests, & development of norms & achievement scores (Bouwer in Landsberg 2005:48).

An inclusive education policy requires schools to respond to the diversity of learners & to provide equal educational opportunities of a high quality for all. With regard to learners who experience barriers to learning a policy of educational equity therefore implies enriching the regular education taking place in the classroom with *learning support*. However *addressing barriers to learning & participation* are shared responsibilities. Learners should be supported to promote their maximum participation in their environment. They should be supported in a joint attempt to reduce, circumvent, break through & even remove the barriers, for each to achieve the *maximum independence possible in learning*. Learning support should enable them to function optimally in the regular classroom, each according to his or her own learning style (own choice), abilities & potential (Bouwer in Landsberg 2005:48). The concept *learning support* then acknowledges the potential of individual learners to grow at their own pace, thus reaching a level of achievement that corresponds to their own unique abilities.

### **10.38 Learning support programme**

The teacher should accommodate the individual learner as “he or she is”, within the classroom curriculum by means of specific or adapted/modified outcomes, adapted instructional strategies, supplemented with further support by a support network of other role players in the life of each learners. The learning support programme also includes the assessment of the progress of learners who are receiving learning support.

### **THE LEARNING SUPPORT PROGRAMME INCLUDES:**

**planning/designing:** taking into consideration all the teaching components such as the curriculum, content, outcomes, aids, strategies, time available, involvement cooperation of all the other stakeholders involved

**implementing** strategies for:

- An individual learner (one-to-one basis)
- An entire group of learners (e.g. cooperative learning)
- A smaller group of learners who experience barriers to learning between groups of learners who are not experiencing barriers to learning

**\$ A critical review of your own role & responsibility with regard to the challenge to establish an inclusive ED. system in the regular schools (with the focus on your specific phase of specialisation).**