STUDY UNITS 2 & 3

☐**Outcome for this theme:** Learners should effectively demonstrate knowledge & understanding of the nature of barriers2L.
☐**Barriers2L in your specific phase of specialisation (the nature of barriers2L):**
Learners who experience barriers to learning

☐ **Assessment criteria:**
In the examination students should show evidence of understanding of & insight into causes & manifestations of nature of barriers2L. Students should be able to critically assess these aspects to respond to the challenge of addressing barriers2L in the specific phase of specialisation & to create a barrier-free environment.

THE MEANING OF THE RELEVANT CONCEPTS TO THIS THEME & RELEVANT ASPECTS SUCH AS:
- **LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS ED. VERSUS THE CONCEPT "LEARNERS WHO EXPERIENCE BARRIERS2L"**
LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS ED. **refers to the addressing of specific support needed to address & overcome barriers to learning which a learner is hampered by, according to the learner's circumstance., & providing adequate support in order to access education / advancement or overcome the learner's barrier by providing supportive equitable access to education & advancement as is accessible by learners who do not experience barriers.**
LEARNERS WHO EXPERIENCE BARRIERS2L: *refers to the specific barriers experienced by a learner which hampers the learners learning/advancement process due to intrinsic or extrinsic factors. Intrinsic factors cause learners to experience barriers that may be due to, physiological, psychological, emotional, sensory, impairments etc, or extrinsic factors caused by poverty, family problems, lack of support from community, educational facilities/ system, public accessibility etc.which may lead to a breakdown in learning.*

- **SPECIAL NEEDS** refers to the special educational needs that learners require due to barriers to learning which they experience on account of intrinsic or extrinsic factors like pervasive social conditions and attitudes, inappropriate educational policy, unhelpful family or school conditions and norms, or classroom situation which does not match the learning needs of the child

- **IMPAIRMENTS** The *causes of impairments are essentially permanent in nature and cannot be removed* (intrinsic factors). These factors are located within the person. There is a wide variety of causes:
    - Genetic factors (Refer to prenatal, perinatal and postnatal causative factors.)
    - Some or other detrimental or harmful factor, such as illness or accident
- **BARRIERS** The concept b*arrier*: A *barrier* is an obstacle or set of circumstances that keeps people or things apart; it prevents communication & bars access to **advancement** (Prinsloo in Landsberg 2005:27).

- **BARRIERS2L** The concept *barriers to learning*: For effective learning to be provided & sustained, the education system must be able to accommodate a diverse range of needs among the learner population. Sometimes factors or barriers arise in the centre of learning, the education system as a whole, within the wider society or within the learner himself or herself which prevent both learner needs & system needs from being met. Where such needs are not met, learning breakdown may occur or learner

needs & system needs may not be met & learners may be excluded from the system. Those factors which lead to the inability of the system to accommodate diversity, which lead to learning breakdown or which prevent learners from accessing educational provision are seen as barriers to learning.

- learners who experience barriers2L the concepts learners & barriers to learning): Thus, for learners to achieve excellence, these barriers should be minimised, removed (overcome). Alternatively, these barriers should be prevented by developing enabling mechanisms to ensure that the curriculum becomes responsive to the needs of all learners, including ensuring that additional support is available to those who need it. This concept promotes effective learning without discrimination or labelling as "special" or "different from the average learner". This concept describes the barrier rather than the person, for example, *deafness, blindness, visual impairment*.

-DISABILITIES A *disability* results from a barrier which is caused by societal injustices perpetrated against persons who experience
- **Physical impairments (e.g. neurological impairment)**
- **Physiological impairments (e.g. chronic health conditions [aids, cancer, diabetes, mellitus, tb**
- **Behavioural disorders**
- **Cognitive impairments**
- **Psychological (mental sicknesses)**
- **Sensory (visual, hearing)**

Individuals who are disabled have physical or physiological impairments and do not receive adequate education. Their environment restricts them from developing full potential.

- DELAYS The concept *restraint* was previously used. Examples of delays are found in motor development; communication and language development; social and emotional development or cognitive development. Delays or disadvantages are barriers caused by factors located in the context or system (extrinsic factors or causes) and are essentially temporary. These factors could be removed, overcome and/or prevented.

NOTE THE MOVE FROM SPECIAL NEEDS TOWARDS BARRIERS & THE REASONS FOR THIS SHIFT.

From the new social or systemic perspective the emphasis in this concept is on the needs of the system, society or the context. The focus is therefore on the causes of the barriers in the system, the society or wider context that should be addressed to create a barrier-free environment when planning the attainment of responsible adulthood & full citizenship for the learners in the country (Lazarus, Daniels & Engelbrecht in Engelbrecht et al 2007:53; **Also refer to the meaning of the concept *addressing barriers to learning.*).**

Included among the issues that give rise to severe barriers in the provision of quality education for all the learners are the culture of poverty, the disintegration of the family, the effects of the decline of moral & value systems, the climate of violence, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, language & cultural differences (Prinsloo in Landsberg 2005:28)

10.5 BARRIER-FREE ACCESS

Barriers which make the built environment inaccessible to people who experience impairments prevent them from being able to live independently & enjoy equal opportunities with all other people. Barriers may include structural barriers such as flights of stairs & inaccessible toilets or inaccessible service points such as public telephones, as well as barriers occurring from the manner in which buildings &

towns are planned & organised. A *barrier-free environment* means one in which access to all facilities & services are equally available to alllearners.

☐ **CAUSES OF BARRIERS2L: instead of using the term intrinsic = use:*factors located within learner***

instead of using the term extrinsic = use:*factors located outside the learner*

☐ **Intrinsic: the causes of barriers** fit two categories, which are intrinsic & extrinsic in nature. :intrinsic refers to barriers which relate to physical, physiological, psychological, impairments which are generally permanent, caused by medical conditions; chronic illness, restricted activity of body parts etc.

☐ **Extrinsic factors which cause barriers refer to** inaccessible environment structures such as flights of stairs & inaccessible toilets or inaccessible service points such as public telephones, as well as barriers occurring from the manner in which buildings & towns are planned & organized; as well as socio-economic conditions like poverty, an uncaring family/ community, social discrimination, no or little support from government structures and lack of educational support for their special learning needs

(previous name:Intrinsic Barriers)**: Factors located within the learner: prenatal, perinatal & postnatal causes**

Examples
-   **Physical impairments (e.g. neurological impairment)**
-   **Physiological impairments (e.g. chronic health conditions [aids, cancer, diabetes, mellitus, tb**
-   **Behavioural disorders**
-   **Cognitive impairments**
-   **Psychological (mental sicknesses)**
-   **Sensory (visual, hearing)**

*(previous name : Extrinsic barrier)s***: - factors located outside the learners** in the wider context (social [including the home environment] economical & political)
Examples
-    **factors located in the school/classroom**
-   **socio-economic background (eg, poverty, lack of family support)**
-   **lack of environmental accessibility to public services (eg.Accessibility to public places &buildings,etc.)**
-   **school system (ramps, for wheelchair access; inadequate support for inclusive education)**
-   **educational system (adaptive curriculum=m which addresses diversity)**
-   **discrimination due to experience of barriers**
-   **lack of governmental support**
-   **lack of social / health services**
-   **lack of financial support**

☐ **THE MANIFESTATIONS OF BARRIERS2L:**
- impairments (physical, intellectual, sensory & other impairments like chronic illnesses & autism caused by barriers located within the learner)
- delays or disadvantages caused by factors located outside the learner:
* development problems or delays
* emotional problems
* behavioural problems
* learning difficulties

☐ LEARNERS CAN INTERPRET ☐ the nature of barriers2L:
☐ the causes of barriers2L
☐ the manifestations of barriers

- FACTORS LOCATED WITHIN the learners: (previously known as intrinsic causes)prenatal, perinatal & postnatal causes (previously known as extrinsic causes), - factors located outside the learners e.g. factors located in the school/classroom; school system; ED. system; in the wider context (social [including the home environment] economical & political)

IMPAIRMENTS, DISABILITIES, DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION & DELAYS

The previously used term *disabilities* have been replaced by the term *impairments*. The description *learners with impairments (*with the focuses on *with)* are now unacceptable & are not to be used. I*mpairments* are not barriers to learning.

a)   IMPAIRMENTS

The concept *impairment* refers to the group of learners who experience physical, sensory, & intellectual or multiple impairments. Some learners who experience impairments may require specialised equipment & learning support in order to access the curriculum & participate effectively in the learning process. Where such support is not provided learning breakdown often takes place & the impairment becomes a disability. The barriers in the context, system or society are the reason why learners who experience impairments may become disabled. Several persons who experience impairments usually find that in many respects they are disabled.

The causes of impairments are essentially permanent in nature & cannot be removed (intrinsic factors).
These factors are located within the person. There is a wide variety of causes:
- Genetic factors (Refer to prenatal, perinatal & postnatal causative factors.)
- Some or other detrimental or harmful factor, such as illness or accident

Address or change the system to fit persons who experience impairments: many persons who experience impairments are able to live with their impairments & should not be viewed as disabled. Thus impairment does not necessarily put the learner at a disadvantage.

With the introduction of inclusion, most of these learners could be accommodated in ordinary learning centres, but the *NCSNET & NCESS Report & White Paper 6* suggest **that learners with "high" needs should still have separate facilities (special schools as resource centres.**

b) Disabilities
Change the word *disabilities to impairments*.
☐ Please note that the concept *handicap* is also an old one.
☐ Take note of the old point of view & new approach.

Because the use of non-discriminatory terminology has become extremely important, the use of concepts such as *intellectual disability & physical disability* might be questioned

The meaning of the concept *disability* has been changed. *The White Paper* on *a Integrated National Disability Strategy* (Ministerial Office of the Deputy President 1997) explains *disability*

☐ **"… as a human right & a development as resulting from factors in the social environment**
☐ **In terms of a social model of disability & NOT a medical model."**

If however the system or context or society impedes such individuals from achieving what they could achieve with their abilities, the impairment may become a "disability".

A *disability* results from a barrier which is caused by societal injustices perpetrated against persons who experience
- **Physical impairments (e.g. neurological impairment)**
- **Physiological impairments (e.g. chronic health conditions [aids, cancer, diabetes, mellitus, TB])**
- **Behavioural disorders**

Individuals who are disabled have physical or physiological impairments & do not receive adequate education. Their environment restricts them from developing full potential.

The official definition accepted by the *Office on the Status of Disabled Persons in the Ministerial Office of the Deputy Presidency*, is based on the socio-political perspective of *disability* which states:

☐ The *disability* is caused by the social environment.
☐ Disabilities are caused by social restrictions & constraints imposed on persons who experience impairments in their pursuit of full & equal participation.
☐ "Disabled people are people who experience impairments who are restricted by society from full & equal participation."
☐ A disability could be alleviated by creating a barrier-free environment, which is by reconstructing society (social model) & not by trying to "cure" or "treat" (medical model) (Ministerial Office of the Deputy President 1997).

Old point of view on disabilities	New way of thinking (Inclusive Education) on
"Natural" causes: physical & medical causes -- old point of view). *Deficit-laden dependants on the rest of society. Marginalise & disadvantage such people.* *No rights* *Exclusion*	*Causes located in the system or context, e.g.: social conditions, e.g. ... school system, e.g. lack of facilities; born with an impairment → factors located in system or context* *→ impairment becomes a disability.* *Disability could be prevented & overcome.* *Disability is not an affliction.* *Disability is a barrier to learning.* *Exercise the full rights of citizenship. Inclusion*

C)   DISABIIITY DISCRIMINATION

The definition of *disability discrimination* in the *Draft Bill on the Promotion of Equality* has the same point of departure & it reads as follows:
☐ the systematic societal & individual discrimination against people with or perceived to have, disabilities that
- hinder or preclude their ability to conduct their activities
- undermine their sense of human dignity & self-worth
- prevent prevents full integration into the bigger society

☐ the systematic & individual discrimination against people with, or perceived to have HIV/AIDS

☐ the defining, perceiving of, or limiting of people with disabilities by their disability rather than examining societal & individual biases & stereotypes that continue to disadvantage & discriminate against people with disabilities

☐ the imposing of a term that would result in a person with a visual, hearing or mobility impairment being separated from the person's guide dog

Therefore, a person who experiences a physical and/or physiological impairment does not need to be disabled: for example a person who experience a physical impairment & is, e.g. in a wheel chair is only disabled when he or she does not have access to a building. For example, i*ntellectually disabled people* are people who experience intellectual impairments who are restricted by society from full & equal participation. We may conclude that people with intellectual impairments are intellectually disabled when society restricts or prevents them from full & equal participation & not because they have intellectual impairments, as the older definitions implied -- & some of those in the new legislation still imply!

For this reason, the new policies refer to *barriers to learning & development* caused by factors located within the contexts (or system or society). The role of the context & not the impairment, is thus emphasised & this necessitates new educational approaches.

D) DELAYS OR DISADVANTAGES

The concept *restraint* was previously used.
.Examples of delays are found in motor development; communication & language development; social & emotional development or cognitive development. Delays or disadvantages are barriers caused by factors located in the context or system (extrinsic factors or causes) & are essentially temporary. These factors could be removed, overcome and/or prevented.

10.30 LEARNING BREAKDOWN
This happens when effective learning does not occur, & when the ideal process is not sustained.

   * **create a positive ethos, culture & health-promoting environment**
   * **provide learner support: identify & assess learners who experience barriers2L in learning process**
   * **provide teacher support: supporting the teacher to identify & assess learners who experience barriers2L, e.g.:**
- **the institutional level support team**
- **other people involved (parents)**
- **ED. support network at different levels: the District support team (also refer to White Paper 6: Tut 502 & other relevant sources)**
- **continuous/ongoing assessment as the major component of the teaching-learning cycle (refer to diagram**

                 (in Engelbrecht et al).
- **general identification & assessment techniques or procedures**
- **alternative or adaptive methods/techniques for assessment of barriers2L**