PSYCHOLOGY

Principles of inclusive curriculum design

Anticipatory
Flexible
Accountable
Collaborative
Transparent
Equitable

Generic considerations

— cost and financial considerations;
— embedding student and staff well-being;
— promoting student engagement;
— use of technology to enhance learning;
— responding to different approaches to learning;
— avoiding stereotypes and celebrating diversity;
— making reasonable adjustments.

Introduction

It is the responsibility of the every member of staff within HE to respond to the requirements of equality legislation. The basic principle that can and should be universally responded to is that it is attitudes, barriers and other forms of discrimination within the system rather than individual characteristics or deficits that are the cause of disadvantage. Employing an inclusive approach is underpinned by the adoption of other principles of inclusive curriculum design, summarised in the adjacent text box and discussed in the introduction section of this guide available at www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/inclusion/disability/ICD_introduction.pdf

May and Bridger assert, in respect of developing an inclusive culture, "making a shift of such magnitude requires cultural and systemic change at both policy and practice levels" (2010: 2). In essence this change is represented by a shift in focus from responding to the 'needs' of individuals or specific groups of students to an approach that anticipates and plans for the *entitlements* of the evolving student population. Thus the onus is on institutions and subject communities to change and adapt their policies and practice rather than expect this of individual or specific groups of students.

There are many generic considerations of inclusive curriculum design, summarised in the adjacent text box, which are discussed in the introduction section. The focus of this section is on subject-specific considerations for those in those subjects aligned to psychology. Here examples of innovation and effective practice are provided to demonstrate that effective practice for one group can and should be effective practice for all. The examples, resources and ideas included in this and other subject guides have come from the sector. They were obtained directly in response to a general request made to the sector during 2010, from a review of the HEA Subject Centres or from recommendations made by colleagues teaching in the specific subject.

Where there are examples in other subject guides that may be particularly relevant or worth reviewing for further adaptation these are flagged. However, notably inspiration and ideas for curriculum design can come from many sources, therefore reading strategies employed and ideas in other subject areas can be a useful source of new ideas.

Inclusive curriculum design: subject-specific considerations

Many materials developed to support inclusive curriculum design for Psychology are transferable to other subjects. Psychology is the largest scientific discipline (QAA, 2010) and is commonly taught as a joint degree with other subjects providing the focus for the application of Psychology content, for example Educational Psychology, Clinical Psychology, or Forensic Psychology.

To operate as a practitioner Psychology students will need to undertake further study and gain accredited recognition by the relevant professional body. Like all subjects with a curriculum influenced by an external professional body, it is necessary for curriculum designers to collaborate to clarify what competence standards are required (Simpson, 2009).

Responding to students' multiple identities and previous educational experiences

Gravestock (2009) stresses the need to remember that all students have multiple identities and that previous educational and life experiences as well as the current situation will impact on the classroom context. An inclusive Psychology curriculum (like that of other subjects) not only addresses student groups covered by legislation, but also allows flexibility to accommodate issues that can potentially be faced by a much larger group of students. The *Inclusive Curriculum Practice Guide* was initially developed to support Psychology staff and students to respond to the requirements of disabled students. However, as noted what is good practice for one group can often enhance the entitlement and improve the overall experience of all students. The eight-part series of e-bulletins provides a valuable overview and link to codes of practice/legislation, teaching materials and project research on inclusive learning and teaching (the Higher Education Academy, 2009). The list of guides, some of which have been updated, includes:

1. *Competence Standards;*
2. *Inclusive Teaching Practice;*
3. *Inclusive Curriculum Practice;*

4.   *Student Engagement;*
5.   *Inclusive Assessment;*
6.   *Inclusive Technology;*
7.   *Mental Well-being;*
8.   *Inclusive Research Communities.*

Increasing the diversity of materials used in teaching and learning

One of the subject-specific skills Psychology students are expected to develop "is to apply multiple perspectives to psychological issues, recognising that psychology" (QAA, 2010: 6). One way in which curriculum designers can enable students to develop their ability to consider different perspectives is through the use of a wider range of material.

The University of East London used the opportunity to convert a text-based resource used in Psychology teaching into a DVD. The creation of *Homoworld: a DVD* www.clevermax. co.uk/homoworld, awarded the best LGBT film in the London Independent Film Festival 2009 (Rees and Butler, 2008), aims to address the experiences of sexual minorities by raising students' awareness of the heterosexual focus of UK society. It asks students to imagine a world where homosexuality is the norm.

Making materials available in different formats not only makes them more accessible to more students, but allows curriculum designers to use the resources for a range of teaching and learning activities, e.g. group tasks to watch and discuss the DVD, or students to create resources to highlight the experiences of other marginalised groups. Consideration of resources at the course design stage can be cost effective and avoid resources being regarded as an extra expense.

Consolidating previous experience and skills to prepare for future employment

An inclusive design strategy to engage students is to devise teaching, learning and assessment activities that allow all students to draw on previous experience and develop skills required for future employment. Norton (2004) outlines how she uses 'Psychology Applied Learning Scenarios' (PALS) in a range of teaching, learning and assessment contexts with Psychology students. Examples for how PALS (Norton, 2004: 4–5) might be presented to the students include:

— presentations and role plays: PALS provide a useful way of engaging small teams of students in active information seeking and evaluation to justify a therapeutic approach and give an oral presentation on their research;
— essays: "Use your knowledge of the appropriate research

Psychology is distinctive in the rich and diverse range of attributes it develops, drawing as it does on skills that are associated with studying the humanities (critical thinking, essay writing) and the sciences (hypothesis testing, numeracy). (Craig and Zinkiewicz, 2010: 9)

Inclusive practice within Psychology higher education

This comprehensive resource explores how to design and deliver an inclusive Psychology curriculum for disabled students (Craig and Zinkiewicz, 2010). The issues raised are can be used in preparing an inclusive curriculum for all Psychology students.

Inclusive curriculum design in higher education

evidence and discuss how effective your chosen theoretical approach(es) would be in determining what can be offered to the client described in the PALS case study";

— examinations: PALS can be used effectively in assessment in written examinations. A successful application in Counselling Psychology involved telling students that the examination would consist of four case studies and they would be asked to choose their own theory and apply it to two cases.

Raising awareness about the multiple careers routes

Due to the multiple career directions Psychology students can pursue some students can be overwhelmed. They may also lack the financial resources, personal contacts or time to pursue a range of work placements. An inclusive approach is to consider how the curriculum can assist all students to meet professionals working in a range of psychology fields. The following two examples show how online resources can extend all Psychology students' access to information about possible careers.

Psychology in the real world: online video resources

Following successful use of online videos introducing Psychology students to different branches of Psychology, the University of Worcester has developed a range of online video casts to look at 'Psychology in the real world' contexts (Catling, 2010) http://ihsc.worc.ac.uk/careersinpsy.

Try your career on for size: Web-based tool to enhance students' work placement experience

The University of Kent is developing web resources to show work placements and is creating an interactive forum to provide peer support for Psychology students undertaking a work placement. Although the focus of this resource is to increase awareness of the benefits of placements, the materials offer insights for all students (Salbu, 2010) www.kent.ac.uk/psychology/employability.