

Standards Unit

IMPROVING DIFFERENTIATION IN BUSINESS EDUCATION

TOPIC 1: WHAT IS DIFFERENTIATION?

PARTICIPANTS' BRIEFING SHEET

Activity 2: Which teaching methods differentiate best? (1 hr 15 mins)

Objectives

- To evaluate and rank teaching methods by their capacity to differentiate
- To identify methods that differentiate well
- To consider and share methods for improving differentiation when using teaching methods that do not differentiate well.

Resources

A set of cards for each group

'Answer sheet'

Stage 1 Which teaching methods differentiate best? (For each of the following tasks work in groups of between four and six) (45 mins)

While completing these tasks you should take 'differentiate' to mean 'can address the different needs, interests and abilities of all learners'.

You are provided with cards describing commonly used teaching methods. Some blank cards are also included. These can be left aside for the moment.

- Deal out the cards so that each member of your group has a batch. Read out and discuss the cards in turn.
- After discussion of each card, place it in one

of the following categories on the assumption that the teaching method is used by itself:

- A Can differentiate well
- B Can differentiate reasonably well
- C Does not differentiate well.

- When you have finished categorising the cards rank them within each category, starting with the best at the top.
- Now use the blank cards to add methods you have found to differentiate effectively.

At the end of the small-group work each group should stick their cards to a display board. Present them in columns headed A, B and C. In the group session, discuss similarities and differences between groups' responses and reasons for categorising teaching methods in a particular way. Display and share any methods you have added to the blank cards.

Stage 2 How can you improve differentiation while using 'weak' teaching methods? (group work) (30 mins)

For each of the methods you placed in category C, decide as a group how you can make that method differentiate better. For example 'Teacher talk' would differentiate better if it were punctuated with Question and Answer or short sessions of group work, especially if the questions were 'high order' with sufficient 'wait time', and help was given to allow all students to answer the questions.