

Standards Unit

IMPROVING DIFFERENTIATION IN BUSINESS EDUCATION

TOPIC 1: WHAT IS DIFFERENTIATION?

FACILITATOR GUIDANCE

Activity 3: Differentiation in practice (Up to 1 hr)

Facilitator notes

The purpose of this activity is to encourage participants to put into practice new differentiated approaches to teaching.

PowerPoint presentation

PowerPoint Slide 13 shows the objective.

There are no other slides.

At some point during the session it's worth emphasising to participants that they may well not experience instant success when trying new techniques but that it's still worth persevering. Our experience shows that learners begin to respond after using the methods several times. Suggest to participants that they start with a group they feel comfortable and confident with. They can then try the approaches with different groups of learners and compare responses.

As we point out in the facilitator notes to Activity 2, it's important always to keep the definition of differentiation in mind. There's a danger that teachers and trainers simply equate differentiation with lots of learner activity. They should be encouraged to think carefully about why they are using a particular method and how it supports differentiation.

Now read the activity.

Objective

- To practise applying to your session planning a wider range of teaching methods that differentiate well.

Resources

PowerPoint Slide 13

Blank session plan template

Each participant will need to bring two copies of a session plan they have already completed so that they can work in pairs on them.

Stage 1 (in pairs) (30 - 45 mins)

- Look at either the session plan you have brought or one that your colleague has brought.
- Consider how you could improve it and differentiate better by using some of the methods discussed in the last group activity.
- Re-write the session plan, or part of it, on the blank session plan provided.
- Repeat for the second session plan.
- Identify one approach and activity you've introduced and prepare to present it to the whole group with your explanation of why you used it.

Stage 2 (as a whole group) (20 mins)

- Present your approach and activity to the whole group and compare approaches.

Facilitator notes

Taking the session forward

You may want to encourage participants to commit themselves to taking further action to introduce new, more differentiated teaching methods and to try these with their learners. They could agree to try one or two methods then arrange to compare experiences with colleagues at a future date.

Or they may want to meet in curriculum teams to review their schemes of work and consider how they might:

- better incorporate differentiated teaching methods;
- distribute these to avoid 'overkill';
- use them to reinforce each other.