

Paper

Becoming a more inclusive teacher by mitigating bias

Program text

This workshop explores cognitive biases that can influence learning environments, through exercises and tools which can mitigate these biases to better navigate the increasingly diverse classroom.

Abstract

Background

This workshop addresses two questions: What does it mean to be an inclusive teacher, teaching in a diverse classroom? What is out there to support teachers?

We are all complex and diverse in so many ways. While it has always been so, with universities now widening participation agendas, our classes reflect societal diversity. However, as we know diversity in itself does not necessarily lead to harmonious, collaborative learning environments in which we all thrive (Killick, 2015). Thus, we increasingly look to the teacher to facilitate inclusive learning environments to meet the needs of diverse student populations (Carroll, 2015; Leask and Carroll, 2013).

Prerequisites

An interest in facilitating inclusive learning environments

Content and structure

- Introduction – 5 min
- Setting the Scene – 15 min
Participants explore teaching diverse classes through simulations or their own experiences. Through these safe explorations, participants are encouraged to share what it means to teach in a diverse classroom and the expectations of being an inclusive teacher.
- Impact of bias – 15 min
Drawing on the Cognitive Bias Codex (Benson), biases that can influence the teaching-learning-assessment nexus are introduced. Participants are invited to discuss the impact of bias in all learning environments and especially in diverse classrooms (Equality Challenge Unit, 2013).
- Ways forward – 15 min
Examples of practical teaching, learning and assessment strategies for mitigating bias and in turn facilitating inclusive teaching and learning in diverse classrooms are shared with participants.
- Wrap up and take aways – 10 min

Expected learning outcomes

Participants will be given the opportunity to identify and reflect on:

- what it means to be an inclusive teacher
- different cognitive biases which can influence learning
- strategies for mitigating bias in diverse classrooms

Educational / didactic relevance

Inclusive teaching lays the foundation for all students to succeed at university.

Author(s)

Donna Hurford, SDU; Stacey M. Cozart, AU; Peter Bjelskou, SDU; Joyce Kling, KU

Literature

Benson, B. Cognitive Bias Codex. Available at <https://busterbenson.com/piles/cognitive-biases/>

Carroll, J. (2015) Tools for Teaching in an Educationally Mobile World. London: Routledge.

Equality Challenge Unit (2013). Unconscious bias and higher education. Available at: <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/unconscious-bias-andhigher-education.pdf>

Killick, D. (2015) Developing the Global Student. Higher education in an era of globalization. London: Routledge.

Leask, B. and Carroll, J. (2013) Good Practice Principles in Practice. Teaching Across Cultures. International Education Association of Australia.