

# TEACHER EDUCATION FOR INCLUSION

International Literature Review



European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education



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Education and Culture DG

## Lifelong Learning Programme

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## PREAMBLE

The topic of Teacher Education for Inclusion was highlighted in a survey of all Agency country representatives as being top priority. The current project focuses on how mainstream teachers are prepared via their initial training to be 'inclusive'. Further information about the Agency Teacher Education for Inclusion project can be found on the Agency website: [www.european-agency.org](http://www.european-agency.org)

Prior to the start of the project, desktop research was undertaken to explore international priorities and on-going work in the field of teacher education generally and teacher education for inclusion specifically. This initial review has been further developed with input from representatives of the European Commission, DG Education and Culture, UNESCO International Bureau of Education and OECD-CERI. In addition, other Agency thematic project recommendations have been included. Most importantly, a review of research information has been conducted by experts from 18 countries participating in the project.

The project experts' contributions to this review were crucial for extending the range and coverage of European research literature. Their inputs to this review are gratefully acknowledged.

This review, along with reports on policy and practice in Agency member countries, will inform the development of a profile to consider the skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and competences needed by teachers working in inclusive settings. The review also considers the policy framework needed to facilitate the changes required in teacher education to support the move towards a more inclusive education system.





## 1. INTRODUCTION

Underlying the process of inclusion is the assumption that the general classroom teacher has certain knowledge and understanding about the needs of different learners, teaching techniques and curriculum strategies. Florian and Rouse (2009) state: *'The task of initial teacher education is to prepare people to enter a profession which accepts individual and collective responsibility for improving the learning and participation of all children'* (p. 596).

Savolainen (2009) notes that teachers play an essential role in quality education and quotes McKinsey and Company who say: *'the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers'*. (p. 16) Studies suggest (e.g. Sanders and Horn, 1998; Bailleul et al., 2008) that the quality of the teacher contributes more to learner achievement than any other factor, including class size, class composition, or background. The need for 'high quality' teachers equipped to meet the needs of all learners becomes evident to provide not only equal opportunities for all, but also education for an inclusive society. Reynolds (2009) says that it is the knowledge, beliefs and values of the teacher that are brought to bear in creating an effective learning environment for pupils, making the teacher a critical influence in education for inclusion and the development of the inclusive school.

Cardona (2009) notes that concentration on initial teacher education *'... would seem to provide the best means to create a new generation of teachers who will ensure the successful implementation of inclusive policies and practices'* (p. 35).

The OECD Report 'Teachers Matter' recognises that the demands on schools and teachers are becoming more complex as society now expects schools to deal effectively with different languages and student backgrounds, to be sensitive to culture and gender issues, to promote tolerance and social cohesion, to respond effectively to disadvantaged students and students with learning or behavioural problems, to use new technologies, and to keep pace with rapidly developing fields of knowledge and approaches to student assessment. Teachers, therefore, need confidence in their ability and the knowledge and skills in inclusive education to meet the challenges that they will encounter in the present school climate. (Carroll et al., 2003)

This review sets out to provide an overview of literature which will inform further work on the Agency Teacher Education for Inclusion project, with a focus on initial teacher education for mainstream teachers. In particular, it provides information regarding:

- Changing conceptions of inclusion;
- The European context for teacher education for inclusion;
- Policy frameworks to support teacher education for inclusion;
- Effective practice in initial teacher education for inclusion with a focus on models of training, curriculum, teaching practice and assessment.

This review assumes that teacher education for inclusion should prepare teachers to engage with learner diversity arising from age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious background, socio-economic status, disability or special educational needs.





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## 2. METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for this literature review was to systematically search internet resources, abstracts and databases including ERIC, British Library Direct, Academic Search Elite, Libris, Questia and High Beam and journal sources such as Emerald, Sage, ScienceDirect, Intute and OpenDOAR. General search engines (Google Scholar, etc.) were used to find 'grey' materials. Searches were also made of relevant websites, online reports and dissertations from Europe and worldwide. These general searches were followed up with more specific citation searches. Material was organised into the themes indicated by chapter headings.

The descriptors used include: Initial / pre-service teacher education / training / for inclusion / diversity / special educational needs / disability. Findings and research from 2000 onwards have been taken into account, with a few exceptions where research is considered to be of particular significance. The focus was on initial teacher education for inclusion, excluding in-service / continuing professional development and with a focus on training within mainstream rather than special education courses. Most evidence is from peer reviewed journals.

This review also incorporates the main findings from an earlier literature review of international documents, reports and projects compiled by Agency staff at the start of the project. This includes material from the European Commission, European Parliament, Council of the European Union, UNESCO and Council of Europe.

At the project kick-off meeting in Dublin experts from member countries were asked to provide information on recent literature from their own countries, in particular that which was written in languages other than English. As a result, materials from eighteen countries<sup>1</sup> across Europe, written in a range of languages, have been incorporated into this review.

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<sup>1</sup> These countries are: Austria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Belgium (Flemish speaking community), Belgium (French speaking community), Iceland, Finland, France, Germany, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, UK – England and UK – Scotland.





### 3. CHANGING CONCEPTIONS OF INCLUSION IN EDUCATION

Globally as well as in Europe, there is a clear move towards inclusive practice and wide agreement on the key principles first encompassed in the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994). Since that time, these principles have been reinforced by many conventions, declarations and recommendations at European and global levels, including the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (2006), which makes explicit reference to the importance of ensuring inclusive systems of education. The UNESCO Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education (2009) set out the following justifications for working towards inclusive practices and educating all children together:

**Educational justification.** Inclusive schools have to develop ways of teaching that respond to individual differences and benefit all children.

**Social justification.** Inclusive schools are able to change attitudes towards diversity and form the basis for a just, non-discriminatory society.

**Economic justification.** It costs less to establish and maintain schools that educate all children together than to set up a complex system of different schools 'specialising' in different groups of children.

The Agency Teacher Education for Inclusion project uses the following definition of inclusion, which is significantly broader than earlier definitions that have often focused on the dilemma between special education and 'integration' into mainstream school. The UNESCO (2008) definition states that inclusive education is: *'an ongoing process aimed at offering quality education for all while respecting diversity and the different needs and abilities, characteristics and learning expectations of the students and communities, eliminating all forms of discrimination'* (p. 3).

It is clear, then, that thinking has moved on beyond the narrow idea of inclusion as a means of understanding and overcoming a deficit and it is now widely accepted that it concerns issues of gender, ethnicity, class, social conditions, health and human rights encompassing universal involvement, access, participation and achievement (Ouane, 2008).

Arnesen et al. (2009) notes that *'inclusion may be understood not just as adding on to existing structures, but as a process of transforming societies, communities and institutions such as schools to become diversity-sensitive'* (p. 46). The authors make the point that the international commitment to human rights has led to a changing view and a reduced emphasis on an individual's 'disability' which has, in turn, led to its classification as 'socio-cultural'. This view is consistent with the disability studies perspective which recognises disability as *'another interesting way to be alive'* (Smith et al., 2009) and sees individual support as the norm for all learners.

More specifically regarding teacher education, Ballard (2003) says that inclusive education is concerned with issues of social justice, which means that graduates entering the teaching profession should *'understand how they might create classrooms and schools that address issues of respect, fairness and equity. As part of this endeavour, they will need to understand the historical, socio-cultural and ideological contexts that create discriminatory and oppressive practices in education. The isolation and rejection of disabled students is but one area of injustice. Others include gender discrimination, poverty and racism'* (p. 59).

The ideology of inclusive education, as outlined above, is implemented in different ways across different contexts and varies with national policies and priorities which are in turn



influenced by a whole range of social, cultural, historical and political issues. When considering policy and practice for inclusive education across countries, therefore, it is important to keep in mind that policy makers and practitioners are not always talking about the same thing (Watkins and D'Alessio, 2009). Mitchell (2005) states: '*Since there is no one model of inclusive education that suits every country's circumstances, caution must be exercised in exporting and importing a particular model. While countries can learn from others' experiences, it is important that they give due consideration to their own social-economic-political-cultural-historical singularities*' (p. 19).

Despite differences in national contexts, it has been possible to highlight the key principles of inclusive policies agreed upon by Agency member countries in the report *Key Principles for Promoting Quality in Inclusive Education* (2009). The inter-related and mutually supporting key principles, which summarise the Agency perspective, are as follows:

- Widening participation to increase educational opportunity for all learners;
- Education and training in inclusive education for all teachers;
- Organisational culture and ethos that promotes inclusion;
- Support structures organised so as to promote inclusion;
- Flexible resourcing systems that promote inclusion;
- Policies that promote inclusion;
- Legislation that promotes inclusion.



#### 4. TEACHER EDUCATION FOR INCLUSION – THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT

Regarding teacher education to meet more diverse needs, the European Commission Communication Improving the Quality of Teacher Education (3/08/2007), calls for different policy measures on the level of member states in order to adapt the profession to meet the new challenges of the knowledge-based economy. It states: *'Changes in education and in society place new demands on the teaching profession. [...] classrooms now contain a more heterogeneous mix of young people from different backgrounds and with different levels of ability and disability. [...] These changes require teachers not only to acquire new knowledge and skills but also to develop them continuously'* (p. 4).

It states that teachers have a key role to play in preparing pupils to take their place in society and in the world of work and points out that teachers in particular need the skills necessary to:

- Identify the specific needs of each individual learner, and respond to them by deploying a wide range of teaching strategies;
- Support the development of young people into fully autonomous lifelong learners;
- Help young people to acquire the competences listed in the European Reference Framework of Key Competences;
- Work in multicultural settings (including an understanding of the value of diversity, and respect for difference);
- Work in close collaboration with colleagues, parents and the wider community.

Further to this, in the Conclusions of the European Council on improving the quality of teacher education (15/11/2007), ministers responsible for education agreed amongst other things, that teachers should:

- Possess pedagogical skills as well as specialist knowledge of their subjects;
- Have access to effective early career support programmes at the start of their career;
- Have sufficient incentives throughout their careers to review their learning needs and to acquire new knowledge, skills and competence;
- Be able to teach key competences and to teach effectively in heterogeneous classes;
- Engage in reflective practice and research;
- Be autonomous learners in their own career-long professional development.

The Communication from the Commission on improving competences for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: An agenda for European cooperation in schools (03/07/2008) also highlights the need for initial teacher training to improve the balance between theory and practice and to present teaching as a problem-solving or research-in-action activity linked more to pupils' and students' learning and progress.

The increasingly diverse mix of students in many schools and the need to pay more attention to the learning needs of individual pupils was noted in the European Parliament resolution on improving the quality of teacher education (23/09/2008) which stated that *'the challenges faced by the teaching profession are increasing as educational environments become more complex and heterogeneous'* (p. 2).



There appears, then, to be a consensus around the need for improvement across the whole continuum of teacher education. However, the Council Conclusions on preparing young people for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (21/11/ 2008) notes that greater efforts are required to implement the Council Conclusions of November 2007. This document invited member states to ensure a high standard of initial teacher education, coherent and co-ordinated early career support and continuing professional development to attract and retain the most able people into the teaching profession, tackle poor performance, support all pupils in making full use of their potential and create school environments in which teachers learn from one another and which focus on improving student learning.

The European Commission, in An updated strategic framework for European co-operation in education and training (16/12/2008) similarly notes that *'the quality of teachers, trainers and other educational staff is the most important within-school factor affecting student performance. With around two million older teachers to be replaced in the next 15 years, the teaching profession must become a more attractive career choice'* (p. 8).

Acknowledging that *'the knowledge, skills and commitment of teachers, as well as the quality of school leadership are the most important factors in achieving high quality educational outcomes'* (p. 15), the Council Conclusions on the professional development of teachers and school leaders (6/11/2009) also state that: *'Good teaching and the ability to inspire all pupils to achieve their very best can have a lasting positive impact on young people's futures'* (p. 6).

The paper adds that no course of initial teacher education can equip teachers with all the competences they will require during their careers and notes that the demands on the teaching profession are evolving rapidly, requiring teachers to reflect on their own learning requirements in the context of their particular school environment and to take greater responsibility for their own lifelong learning.

European Union member states and the European Commission have strengthened their political co-operation through ET2020 – the strategic framework for co-operation in education and training. This includes the promotion of equity, social cohesion and active citizenship as one of four long term strategic objectives and priority areas and includes a focus on increasing competence in reading, maths and science and reducing early leaving from school. This agenda further reinforces the need for teacher education to support more inclusive practice.

The Commission organises peer-learning activities between member states interested in jointly developing national policies and systems in specific fields. The Knowledge System for Lifelong Learning has been created to disseminate this information. As part of the Education and Training 2010 work programme, the current agenda for peer-learning has been set by the Conclusions of the European Council discussed above and includes a peer-learning cluster for Teachers and Trainers (TT). Such clusters apply the 'open method of co-ordination' that aims to help member states to critically reflect upon their own policies in the context of European co-operation and to learn from other countries' practices. Through peer-learning, member state experts can compare their specific policies with others and identify key policy questions and other factors that may be transferred to their own contexts, and thus help make their own policies more effective.

However, it should be kept in mind that teaching and education are deeply rooted in the culture of particular places and thought needs to be given as to how ideas can be made relevant to each individual context (Ainscow, 2007).

The Report of the Peer-Learning Activity (PLA), Oslo, May 2007 'How can teacher education and training policies prepare teachers to teach effectively in culturally diverse



settings?’ provides evidence from a project in the Netherlands that student teachers can learn a great deal by undertaking a teaching practicum abroad to experience the reality of living and working in a different cultural context. Participants concluded that dealing with a culturally diverse classroom means much more than dealing with pupils who have a poor grasp of the language of instruction. The PLA concluded that teacher education should provide teachers with *knowledge* about intercultural issues in school and society and engage teachers’ *commitment* to working in a culturally diverse society. Several basic teaching skills were felt to be particularly important in this context:

- Classroom research skills and the ability to engage with academic research;
- Monitoring the effectiveness of their classroom interventions;
- Reflecting critically on their own practice;
- Working collaboratively.

In addition, initial teacher education should equip teachers with the skills to:

- Examine and reassess their attitudes towards other cultures;
- Develop empathy and treat all students as individuals;
- Promote the success of all students and the strategies to deal appropriately with prejudice at school;
- Teach learners who lack a strong command of the language of instruction;
- Make good use of the resources that minority learners bring to the classroom;
- Communicate effectively and with cultural sensitivity with parents.

A further Peer-Learning Activity, Lithuania, 2009 produced the following conclusions regarding teacher education:

- Classroom practice (CP) will be most effective if student teachers are given specific tasks to focus on in each period of CP and if their work is guided by tutors and mentors;
- Peer learning can be an effective way to encourage reflection amongst groups of student teachers;
- The school-based mentor is one of the most powerful sources of influence on student teachers. Therefore, mentors require extensive preparation covering both content and process. The development, and subsequent deployment, of mentorship skills can be an important stage in the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) pathway of experienced teachers;
- All teaching professionals should understand that ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ are not in contradiction;
- Teaching competences can best be demonstrated and assessed in an authentic learning environment. This has consequences for the way in which the assessment of student teachers’ competences is organised.

The next section will consider the wider policy framework which is needed to support the development of inclusive practice more widely and in turn facilitate a more inclusive approach to initial teacher education’.





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## 5. A WIDER POLICY FRAMEWORK SUPPORTING TEACHER EDUCATION FOR INCLUSION

Teacher issues are high on policy agendas in many countries and increasing attention is being given to teacher education for inclusion in particular. Peters and Reid (2009) propose an advocacy model for teacher education based on principles of inclusive education and disability studies. They point out, however, that moving from the prevalent technical-rational discourses based on (special) education towards a socio-political discourse takes time because they are *'so enmeshed in our national psyche, legislation, school procedures and daily classroom practices'* (p. 557). They highlight the need for societal reform, disability / diversity reform and school reform to be addressed together, to bring about a shift away from the medical or deficit model of special education.

Slee (2010) says: *'Just as normalization was rejected by many disabled people as a form of assimilation that invited them to deny difference, inclusive education is compromised by holding the extant regular school as the model for reform'* (p. 19).

Garcia-Huidobro (2005) points out that equity must be at the centre of general policy decisions and not limited to peripheral policies oriented to correct the effects of general policies that are not in tune with a logic of justice or prevention. In moving to support education for all and remove barriers to participation and learning for all disadvantaged groups, essential links must be made between the reform of the education system and other policies such as those to alleviate poverty, improve maternal and child health, promote gender equality and ensure environmental sustainability and global partnership.

In some countries the involvement of a large number of decision-making bodies fragments policy and practice including debates around teacher education programmes (Brownell et al., 2005; Sindelar and Rosenberg, 2000). This indicates the need for clear vision and purpose and parallel changes in policy and practice to remedy discrepancies in legislation. (Lesar, 2007). Kyriazopoulou and Weber (2009) developed a tool for monitoring developments towards inclusive practice. Within their indicators for legislation, they recognised the need for legislation on education to address the quality of training for teachers, psychologists, non-educational personnel, etc. with special regard to dealing with diversity.

Many researchers have raised the difficult issue of terminology. Keil et al. (2006) noted that at policy level, there have been some largely unsuccessful attempts to clarify the use of different terms around inclusion and diversity and in particular, special needs and disability. In New Zealand, Alton-Lee (2003) notes that the concept of 'diversity' rejects the idea of a 'normal' group and 'other' or 'minority' groups of learners and sees diversity and difference as central to the focus of quality teaching. OECD (2010) define diversity as: *'characteristics that can affect the specific ways in which developmental potential and learning are realised, including cultural, linguistic, ethnic, religious and socio-economic differences'* (p. 21). They do, however, make a distinction between 'diversity' and 'disparity', seeing 'diversity' as an inevitable reflection of the richness of human experience as distinct from 'disparity', in which diverse characteristics are associated with different outcomes and differential treatment. O'Neill et al. (2009) also note major difficulties with terminology including 'linguistic dexterity' (Slee, 2001), where traditional special educators use the language of inclusion to describe unchanged special education practices.

Many others have expressed concerns about categorisation and labelling (Hart, 1996; Lewis and Norwich, 2005) and Black-Hawkins et al. (2007) argue that, at school level, these terms are used when the difficulties of the students exceed the capacity of the school to respond. Such terms can support a view that sees difficulties as 'medical problems' which, in turn, reduces the school's sense of responsibility.



In considering how national education policy can support teacher education for inclusion, there is a need to overcome the paradoxical nature of separate provision that leads to the development of separate training. In England, for example, in the context of increasing specialisation of schools for different learners, Young (2008) suggests that the implied need for an ever greater range of qualifications and specialism limits who teachers think they can teach and quotes Seymour Sarason (1990) who says: *'School personnel are graduates of our colleges and universities. It is there that they learn that there are at least two types of human beings, and if you choose to work with one of them you render yourself legally and conceptually incompetent to work with others'* (p. 258).

Young points out that if the system of licensure is such that we cannot prepare teachers to teach all learners, then there will remain some boundary categories that create divisions among students that result in inequitable experiences, and likely, outcomes. The UNESCO International Conference on Education (ICE) report *'Inclusive Education: The way of the future'* (2009) also supports the view that due to the diversity of difficulties with which all teachers are confronted, separate pre-service training tracks (special and mainstream) are unhelpful. It is a better use of resources for teachers to develop skills and experience as mainstream educators and only later to specialise. Specialists should not be too narrowly defined, but could be built on a broad base of expertise at lower levels of training.

One key debate is between those who argue for the introduction of alternative, more flexible training routes and those who wish to further professionalise teaching. The supporters of de-regulation view certification as *'an unnecessary regulatory hurdle'* (McLeskey and Ross, 2004) and suggest a *'utilitarian'* approach to teacher education, which increasingly takes it out of the academic arena (Bartell, 2001). An emphasis on accreditation, rather than learning, may lead teachers to be trained in skills and practices through an *'apprenticeship'* approach which may produce *'technicians'* without the required underpinning knowledge and understanding. While alternative training routes may attract candidates from diverse backgrounds into teaching, all approved programmes must include rigorous teacher preparation activities and prepare teachers to meet the needs of all learners.

Blanton et al. (2007) note the difficulty of gaining consensus around teacher quality. McLeskey and Ross (2004) suggest that although educational researchers have frequently considered the definition of a *'highly qualified'* teacher and the characteristics of quality teacher education, the debate today takes place in a *'highly charged political context'* which calls for active engagement of all those involved (Cochran-Smith, 2002; Fenstermacher, 2002; Feuer, Towne and Shavelson, 2002).

When policy makers and those involved in general education teacher preparation consider the design and implementation of programmes, special education is *'rarely on their radar screens'* (Rosenburg et al., 2007). Most debate by policy makers and reports in the education literature (e.g. Goldhaber, 2004; Zeichner and Schulte, 2001) is around the secondary content model, whereas wider competences such as behaviour management and social skills will be more important to educators in settings which include students with a range of learning needs (e.g. Council for Exceptional Children, 2003; Neel et al., 2003; Rosenberg et al., 2004).

National education policy, with a heavy focus on outcomes, can also impact on teacher education. Reynolds (2001) points out the difficulties of focusing on values in an output driven system and the need to look longer term beyond that which can easily be observed / tested. Cochran-Smith (2005) similarly challenges the purpose of schooling and of teacher education, seeking a move away from a focus on producing learners who can pass tests.



Edwards and Protheroe (2003) suggest that the focus on pupil performance in national tests emphasises the performance of student teachers as deliverers of a curriculum rather than a more appropriate focus on responsive and interactive pedagogy and Slee (2010) notes that teacher education needs to enter the debate about curriculum rather than 'training teachers to install it' (p. 20). He notes the need for critical learning in the area of assessment in the age of high-stakes testing and the need to take the opportunity offered by the education of the inclusive teacher to 'insert a less-restrictive vision' that focuses again on the needs, broader capacities and potential of the diverse learners in our classrooms.

The McKinsey Report (2007) examined data from 25 school systems and concluded that the high-performing school systems '*get the right people to become teachers; they develop these people into effective instructors; they put in place systems and targeted support to ensure that every child is able to benefit from excellent instruction*' (p. 37). In order to recruit and retain high quality teachers, high-performing systems are reported as having common strategies and best practices for attracting strong candidates: marketing and recruitment techniques taken from business to increase the supply of quality applicants; the creation of alternative routes for experienced personnel; effective selective mechanisms (with processes for early removal of low-performing teachers soon after appointment) and good starting compensation. High-performing systems also have strategies in place to recognise a common set of characteristics that can be identified before entry into teaching.

Large numbers of teachers, recruited during the 1960s and 1970s are now close to retirement and in many areas trained teachers are not staying in the profession in the long term. As research indicates that the more preparation prospective teachers receive, the more likely they are to remain in the profession (Darling-Hammond, 2003), this further reinforces the need for effective teacher education which takes account of the increasing diversity of needs in today's classrooms.

The UNESCO 2009 report 'Inclusive Education: The Way of the Future' (op. cit.) emphasises the need to reinforce the role of teachers by working to improve their status and their working conditions, develop mechanisms for recruiting suitable candidates and retaining qualified teachers who are sensitive to different learning requirements.

Research by Day et al. (2009) highlights the important role of school leaders on learner outcomes. They also have an impact on trainee teachers, who will be heavily influenced by their school practice. Day et al. identify a common repertoire of broad educational values, personal and interpersonal qualities, dispositions, competences, decision-making processes and a range of skills possessed by all effective head teachers in the study. These characteristics were underpinned by a clearly articulated set of values focusing on promoting individual and social well-being and raising standards of achievement for all learners. They noted that, while good leaders perform their tasks regardless of policy, they are performed more effectively in a 'benign policy environment' and reflect 'social aspiration and professional responsibility'. Day et al. conclude that, in order to improve learner outcomes, a coherent policy framework is 'necessary but not sufficient'. A more 'morally centred approach to leadership' should be at the forefront of policy debate.

National education policy then, needs to resolve the debate around standards, accountability and equity in education to further improve inclusive practice and ensure that the next generation of teachers are brought up in inclusive settings which develop appropriate attitudes and values. The findings of the UNESCO report 'Learning Divides' (Willms, 2006) provide evidence that strong school performance and equity can go hand in hand. Findings show that schools with heterogeneous intakes on average tend to perform



as well as those with homogeneous intakes and that schooling systems can be highly inclusive and still yield high literacy performance.

Sharma et al. (2006) point out that limited international studies have been carried out to understand pre-service teachers' concerns and preparedness for teaching diverse learners. Many studies conclude that teachers are key to the success of inclusive education, yet candidates are still leaving initial teacher education without the skills, knowledge, or attitudes needed to work with all of their future students (Jones and Fuller, 2003). Some have '*a heart for diversity instruction*' but lack the knowledge and skills of how to go beyond scratching the surface with students (Edwards and Kuhlman, 2007).

There is a need to recognise that legislation, funding, curriculum, assessment and accountability should be considered holistically if they are to support a move towards more inclusive practice in which teacher education plays a key role. The recent Council Conclusions on the social dimension of education and training (Council of the European Union, 2010) note that education and training systems across the EU need to ensure both equity and excellence and recognise that improving educational attainment and key competences for all are crucial not only to economic growth and competitiveness, but also to reducing poverty and fostering social inclusion.

It states: '*Creating the conditions required for the successful inclusion of pupils with special needs in mainstream settings benefits all learners. Increasing the use of personalised approaches, including individualised learning plans and harnessing assessment to support the learning process, providing teachers with skills to manage and benefit from diversity, promoting the use of co-operative teaching and learning, and widening access and participation, are ways of increasing quality for all*' (p. 5).



## 6. INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION FOR INCLUSION (ITE)

### 6.1 Models of initial teacher education for inclusion

Current teacher education programmes have been influenced by a number of pedagogical traditions in past decades, for example academic, practical, technological, personal and critical / social re-constructionist traditions (Schepens et al., 2009). Britzman (2003) described practices in institutions holding onto the positivist or academic tradition as providing knowledge through various, often fragmented courses while schools provide the setting where student teachers are expected to apply those theories and integrate knowledge and practice by themselves.

A number of research studies discuss the effectiveness of different approaches to the preparation of pre-service teachers for inclusion. Stayton and McCollun (2002) identified three models that exist in programmes that train for inclusion: the Infusion model, the Collaborative Training model and the Unification model. In the Infusion model students take 1 or 2 courses that cover inclusive education. In the Collaborative Training model, many more courses deal with teaching inclusive classes, and mainstream teaching students and special education students do all, or part of their practical experiences together. In the Unification model, all students study the same curriculum that trains them for teaching mainstream education with a focus on pupils with special needs.

Pugach and Blanton (2009) refer to discrete, integrated and merged models and point out that these form a continuum from least to most collaborative. Wang and Fitch (2010) concluded that all ITE programmes should embrace the key elements of successful co-teaching to train better collaborative teachers for 21<sup>st</sup> century inclusive education.

An approach that incorporates specific activities for inclusive education training in a general education subject is described by Golder et al. (2005) and Pearson (2007). This is also referred to as the 'permeation' or 'embedded' model and requires careful planning and monitoring if it is not to appear unplanned and incoherent (Avramidis et al., 2000). This 'content infused approach' is under-researched (Loreman, 2010) but is supported by many studies including Voltz (2003), Woloshyn and Bennett (2003) and Loreman and Earle (2007). Loreman (op. cit.) however, stresses the need for strong co-ordination and leadership within this approach.

Gultig (1999) while supporting the need for an integrated approach, suggests that teacher education tends to 'get caught in the trap' of focusing on detail, for example, teaching about human rights, rather than taking a human rights approach.

In response to the Bologna Declaration, schools of education in Spain have initiated a significant reform of initial teacher education programmes so that diversity and special / inclusive education content will be infused across the curriculum where all instructors will deal with SEN within subject areas (Cardona, 2009).

The model most commonly described in the literature is that of mandatory or elective courses on inclusive and / or special education (Van Laarhoven et al., 2006, 2007; Lancaster and Bain, 2007; Lambe, 2007) but Florian and Rouse (2009) argue that modules or units on special education in initial teacher education serve to *'reinforce the sense of separation that characterises special education and leads to the belief that such children are the responsibility only of those who have undertaken specialist courses'* (p. 596).



In Finland training is not organised in disability-oriented streams but rather aimed at providing teachers with a wide variety of knowledge and skills that they can apply in various settings and situations (Savolainen, 2009).

Steinweg et al. (2005) present research findings showing no significant difference between traditional and online presentation of courses and says this could provide strong indications for policy-makers and administrators regarding development of future courses and programmes. Bartolo (2010) discusses the use of web-based training and suggests that e-learning, while not an easy option, can provide an alternative access strategy and focus on learner-directed learning.

Increasingly, teacher education requires links with other partners and Darling-Hammond (2006) points out that *'the enterprise of teacher education must venture out further and further from the university and engage ever more closely with schools in a mutual transformation agenda, with all of the struggle and messiness that implies'* (p. 301).

A coherent conceptual framework underpinning a clear view of learning and concept of 'good teaching' is also widely considered to be a major factor in terms of quality teacher education programmes. Hoban (2004) believes that such a framework should be based on four key dimensions:

- Conceptual links across the university curriculum;
- Theory-practice links between the school and university settings;
- Socio-cultural links between the participants in the programme;
- Personal links that help shape the identity of each teacher-educator.

He concludes that the socio-cultural dimension overlays the other three and stresses that it is the social interaction between the participants that enables a programme to be dynamic and change according to relevant cultural or political needs with relationships and communication being at the heart of a coherent teacher education programme.

In a discussion about the 'intractable theory-practice issue', Korthagen et al. (2006) say: *'telling new teachers what research shows about good teaching and sending them off to practice has failed to change, in any major way, what happens in our schools and universities. Neither has having teachers write behavioral objectives nor exhorting them to be reflective practitioners produced major leaps forward'* (p. 1038).

They present the following seven principles to illustrate one way of beginning to create a common language for the development of a pedagogy of teacher education. Learning about teaching:

- Involves continuously conflicting and competing demands;
- Requires a view of knowledge as a subject to be created rather than as a created subject;
- Requires a shift in focus from the curriculum to the learner;
- Is enhanced through (student) teacher research;
- Requires an emphasis on those learning to teach working closely with their peers;
- Requires meaningful relationships between schools, universities and student teachers;
- Is enhanced when the teaching and learning approaches advocated in the programme are modelled by the teacher educators in their own practice.



Discussing teacher education for social justice, Cochran-Smith (2008) says that several interpretive frames are key, including an understanding of educators as potential agents of social change and a related understanding that all people have multiple identities and life histories structured by race, class, culture and other aspects of existing societal systems of privilege and oppression. Teachers must question assumptions, pose and research problems and use curricula, tests and research as 'generative' rather than 'prescriptive'. Finally, Cochran-Smith says that teaching practice, when consistent with the aims of social justice, always takes a stand on society's current distribution of resources and current respect / disrespect for social groups.

Whatever model is followed, a critical consideration for teacher education is how expertise develops. Kershner (2007) makes reference to Glaser's (1996) interactive phases of development to gain a sense of the combination of scaffolding, collaboration and developing action involved in gaining the know-how of an expert teacher. These phases are: externally supported, transitional and self-regulatory which all depend on a transformational approach to learning involving seeking meaning and looking beyond the immediate task.

Bain et al. (2009) applied an embedded course design on 4 levels: a knowledge and awareness level; skill building through active experience; 'real world' application with feedback and then a personal impact level as part of course assessment.

In the following section, the content of initial teacher education courses will be considered in more detail.

## **6.2 The initial teacher education curriculum**

This section will provide an overview of the literature on the initial teacher education curriculum. The key areas of attitudes, values and beliefs, pedagogy and teacher practice will be explored in more detail in separate sections (see 7.3, 7.4 and 7.5).

Scruggs and Mastropieri (1996) analysed 28 studies conducted from 1958 to 1995 and found that, overwhelmingly, teachers endorse the general concept of providing support to students with disabilities. In spite of that, only one third of the teachers felt that they had the time, preparation, resources and skills needed. More recently, similar findings have been reported by Forlin (2001), Loreman (2002), Jobling and Moni (2004) Sharma, Ee and Desai (2003) Shippen et al. (2005) and Lambe and Bones (2006a). The OECD TALIS survey (2009) also found that teachers do not feel fully prepared to cope with the challenges of students with SEN. With this in mind, what should be included in initial teacher education for inclusion?

Beard et al. (2007) conclude that the following elements of good practice in initial teacher education warrant extension across the European countries: a pre-practicum prior to an initial teacher education programme; a pre-practicum as part of the teacher education programme; a period of supervised school teaching experience; successful completion of an examination or other assessment arrangements; a monitored probationary period and a period of induction, supported by mentoring arrangements.

The UNESCO report 'Inclusive education: The way of the future' (op. cit.) proposes that a basic training curriculum for teachers might include advice about how to:

- Translate relevant research findings (including brain research) into effective teaching practices;
- Assess the progress of all students through the curriculum, including how to assess learners whose attainments are low and whose progress is slow;

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- Use assessments as a planning tool for the class as a whole, as well as in drawing up individual plans for students;
  - Observe students in learning situations, including the use of simple checklists and observation schedules;
  - Relate the behaviour of particular learners to normal patterns of development (particularly important for teachers of young children);
  - Involve parents and pupils in the assessment process;
  - Work with other professionals – and know when to call on their specialised advice and how to use their assessments for educational purposes.

Bransford et al. (2005) base their consideration of how best to prepare teachers for a changing world on four kinds of research evidence:

- Basic research on learning, development, language acquisition and social contexts;
- Research on how learning conditions and teaching practices influence learning;
- Research on how teacher learning affects teaching practices and student outcomes;
- Research on how teachers learn successful practices.

They stress the importance of creating a ‘cognitive map’ of teaching that teacher educators must have to enable them to structure content and explain the ‘big picture’ to prospective teachers.

Brownell et al. (2005) identified the following characteristics in general teacher education programmes judged as highly effective. These are: (a) connections between carefully planned coursework and field work so that students connect what they learn with classroom practice; (b) the use of varied strategies by teacher educators to hold themselves accountable for pre-service teacher learning; (c) coursework and field work that emphasise the needs of a diverse student population; (d) teacher education that occurs within a collaborative professional community, that includes pre-service teachers, in-service teachers and teacher educators; (e) a heavy emphasis on subject matter pedagogy that facilitates the development of content specific pedagogy; (f) a clear vision of high quality teaching that is pervasive throughout the programme, and (g) use of active pedagogy (as contrasted with lecture) by teacher educators to promote student reflection that is likely to lead to conceptual change by pre-service teachers.

Welch and Guntig (2002), exploring changes in the teacher education system in South Africa, found that the apparent consensus around key issues is underpinned by critical differences as regards:

- The meaning of ‘competence’ with debate between those who advocate a holistic integration of theory and practice and those who focus more strongly on technical skills;
- The relative weighting that should be given to theoretical education and practical skills and the desirability of school-based teacher education;
- The desirability of using more flexible modes of delivery in order to service teachers while they teach.

Nuova (2009) suggests that teacher training is too far removed from the professional routines and cultures of teaching and suggests 5 proposals to influence teacher training programmes. These include a practical component that focuses on pupil learning and



study of specific cases, training inside the profession to acquire professional culture and experience, attention to communication and relationships, teamwork and collective practice. In addition, programmes should be characterised by principles of social responsibility, public communication and professional participation in the public space of education.

Ferreira and Graça (2006) recommend that, to take full account of the diversity of the current school population, the following aspects should be included in teacher education: learning difficulties and disabilities; emotional and behavioural problems; communication techniques and technologies; symbolic representation, signification and multiculturalism; different curricula; teaching methods and techniques and educational relationships. To ensure culturally responsive teaching, Gay and Kirkland (2003) say that teacher education must include critical cultural self-reflection that takes place in a context of guided practice in realistic situations and with authentic examples and Baglieri (2007) proposed the incorporation of Disability Studies in teacher education.

Regarding multi-cultural education, Winch-Dummett (2006) identifies, in addition to lesson organisation and outcomes, teaching strategies and teacher communication, the need for 'cultural inclusion' that includes acknowledging culturally specific activities and beliefs, promoting values and an ethos of respect for cultural diversity. Gregory and Williams (2000) highlight the need for a positive model of bilingualism in teacher education, with trainee teachers recognising bilingualism as a strength in learners.

It is clear then that teachers need to have not only theoretical and practical knowledge but also the capacity to bring about optimal levels of learning for all students. (Bakken et al., 2002).

Forlin (2008) points out that teachers also need a detailed understanding of their role as a teacher, requiring a 'self-critical perspective that involves constant involvement in a process of reflection and introspection' (Cruickshank, 1987, cited in Bakken et al., 2002). She adds: '*effective inclusive teaching also requires a high level of ethics and morals, an understanding that the teacher's role is not only to inform and facilitate learning but also to act as a role model for guiding the development of their students, and a commitment to enable inclusion to happen*' (p. 65).

Chevalier (2006) reporting on an international conference included a charter for teachers' initial training which included: reflection on issues of norm, difference and inclusion, intercultural education, positive attitudes and high expectations, innovative skills in assessment, good communication and ICT.

Naukkarinen (2008) studying the Finnish primary school teacher education curriculum suggests that more effort is needed to integrate inclusive education content. Some of the areas identified as key to development are as follows:

- Staff need to clarify for themselves the concept of inclusive education with more opportunities for in-service training in inclusive education and more collaboration among all staff.
- The diversity of learners should be introduced from the viewpoint of a primary school teacher and not as pathology or medical-based knowledge that is separate from a teacher's daily work. Language use also has to be changed from the medical to the social model (Saloviita, 2005).
- As the majority of initial teacher education (ITE) students come from a non-inclusive educational background, it is crucial to reduce / remove this 'experience-based barrier' to adopting the ideas of inclusive education.

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- Teachers of education, multicultural studies and teaching practice should plan and teach more together; the solving of problems could bind together the central topics of the curriculum.

Reporting on the Teacher for all Children (TAC) programme developed at the University of South Florida, St. Petersburg, Stoddard et al. (2006) describe four enrichment programme elements: (a) the teacher-mentor experience; (b) the portfolio; (c) professional behaviour assessment (aimed to help the transition from pre-service to in-service status) and (d) team building skills. The evaluation showed that time spent in real classrooms, use of reflective assignments and collaboration between universities and public schools were strong features of the programme and gave teachers a greater sense of efficacy, increased use of inclusive practices and high levels of leadership.

Many writers focus on the need for initial teacher education to develop reflective practitioners. Barrett and Green (2009) identify two mechanisms for helping teacher candidates become more accomplished practitioners – namely reflective practice and teachers as researchers and this finding is also supported by Rodrigues (2009) who summarised his proposals as 4 'R's:

- Development of a Research attitude – to cope with the 'unknown';
- Reflection (acting, planning, sharing);
- Knowledge of Real contexts (active participation and change);
- Resilience (keeping the focus on learning and the fact that 'school matters').

Larrivee (2000) highlights the importance of reflection, believing that when teachers become reflective practitioners, they '*move beyond a knowledge base of discrete skills to a stage where they integrate and modify skills to fit specific contexts, and, eventually, to a point where the skills are internalized enabling them to invent new strategies*' (p. 294).

Cardona (2009) suggests that student teachers in new ITE programmes must be prompted to (a) raise their level of awareness regarding issues of disability, and (b) begin to see learners with disabilities as resources providing opportunities to learn and understand student characteristics more deeply in order to develop skills and empathy with the learners' abilities. Cardona also stresses the need for ITE faculties to explore their understanding of disability and inclusion issues and examine the ways that the curriculum addresses issues of equity within the educational system and the teacher's responsibility for these issues. This is in line with the findings of Guðjónsdóttir et al. (2008) who conducted a three year study of inquiry-based teacher education and highlighted the need to challenge the narrow view of inclusive practice and facilitate a holistic approach responsive to issues raised by equity, poverty and diversity.

Kershner (op. cit.) in considering how teachers' knowledge for meeting pupils' SEN might be extended, emphasises:

- The fundamental importance of understanding child development in context, as a basis for understanding the identification of special educational needs.
- The value of knowing that you do not know everything, and believing that change is possible.
- The need to communicate understanding and resolve difference between the people who have useful knowledge.
- The need to recognise the school as a site for the development of teaching expertise and the creation of knowledge.



Franzkowiak (2009) following a survey of primary school teacher training in Germany recommended that introductory courses on inclusive education should be mandatory for all teacher education students, that bachelor and masters courses should include inclusive education and combined degree programmes for primary and special education should be promoted.

Spandagou et al. (2008) developed the Problem Based Learning framework (PBL) into two mandatory special and inclusive education units of study for pre-service teachers. The three areas of inclusive principles, effective teaching practices and behaviour management are underpinned by the common themes of attitudes and collaboration.

Many researchers have emphasised the importance of developing skills in collaboration and negotiation (for example Snell and Jenney, 2000; Carroll et al., 2003, Griffin et al., 2006; Hajkova, 2007). Smith and Leonard (2005) stress the importance of collaborative skills and the ability to solve problems to enable teachers to meet students' support needs which may change regularly.

The ACCEPT model (Van Laarhoven et al., 2006, 2007), implemented for special and general education pre-service teachers, included a simulated lesson plan as a class assignment, a field experience in an inclusive classroom and the development of specific competences using vignettes with students' profiles.

A new teacher education programme at the University of Utah, described by Hardman (2009), includes an emphasis on Universal Design for Learning, continuous field experiences, an extensive professional education core of knowledge and skills and teaching specialisation (in early childhood, primary, secondary and special education).

There appears to be a broad consensus around the areas to be addressed during initial teacher education for all phases although Romano and Chambliss (2000) suggest that many needs appear to be greater for teachers at the secondary level. Other key areas include: consideration of differences in learning (Kavkler, 2009), the importance of classroom culture (Karpljuk et al., 2008), skills in assessment and accommodations (Woloshyn et al., 2003), assistive technology (Van Laarhoven et al., 2007) and the use of ICT (Wilcox et al. 2002). Johnson and Hallgarten (2002) suggest that applying evidence from cognitive neuroscience in their work might lead to teachers reclaiming their professional autonomy.

Many researchers (for example Chandler, 2000; McMahon and McNamara, 2000) also note that few teachers have adequate training in the management of challenging behaviours, which is of interest as such behaviour is often said to cause the failure of inclusive programmes.

Several collaborative European initiatives have recently provided a useful basis for developing a curriculum for initial teacher education for inclusion. The IRIS project, developed via a Comenius grant from the European Commission, aimed to improve teacher training through research into inclusive classrooms. The training pack contains modules on classroom climate, the teacher in the inclusive classroom, support in inclusive settings, inclusive assessment, IEPs and curriculum adaptations, strategies and practices and can be used in multi-professional contexts. These areas also have much in common with the work of Kosnik and Beck (2009) who outline seven key elements of pre-service preparation for teachers which includes: programme planning, assessment, classroom organisation and community; inclusive education; subject content and pedagogy; professional identity and vision for teaching.

Regarding inclusive assessment, Watkins (2007) makes recommendations for initial, in-service and specialist teacher training, stressing that teachers need information on the



theory and rationale for inclusive assessment and preparation for using on-going assessment as a tool for their work.

Feyerer (2006) describes the content of teacher education for inclusion developed by the ERASMUS projects INTEGER and EUMIE (<http://www.ph-ooe.at/iip/iip/iip/eumie/index-en.html>) which may also be useful in considering course content for pre-service teacher education.

Finally, as part of the OECD project, Milner and Tenore (2010) set out a series of questions for teacher educators to consider when planning and developing a curriculum for their students which will better prepare them for diverse learners.

### **6.3 Attitudes, beliefs and values in initial teacher education**

The importance of positive attitudes of beginning teachers in inclusive settings has been well documented (Avramidis et al. 2000; Avramidis and Norwich, 2002; Hadadian and Chiang, 2007; Van Reusen et al., 2001). However, both pre-service and in-service courses that address the skills and the attitudes of teachers towards students with disabilities are frequently deemed insufficient by teachers (Bartak and Fry, 2004; Gary et al., 2002; Gould and Vaughn, 2000; Jahnukainen and Korhonen, 2003; Westwood and Graham, 2003) and many writers report a tension between meeting the special needs of some students and disadvantaging others.

Chambers and Forlin (2010) define an attitude as: '*a learned, evaluative response about an object or an issue and ... a cumulative result of personal beliefs*' (p. 74). Forlin adds that beliefs influence pre-service teacher attitudes to inclusive education that in turn, influence their intentions and behaviours. Attitudes are formed by experience as well as by implicit learning and may reflect an individual's personality (Zimbardo and Lieppe, 1991). Johnson and Howell (2009) suggest that attitudes may be seen to have three related components: cognitive (i.e., the idea or assumptions upon which the attitude is based), affective (i.e., feelings about the issue), and behavioural (i.e., a predisposition toward an action that corresponds with the assumption or belief) (Wood, 2000). As a result, the formation and modification of teacher attitudes are important areas of education research (Weisman and Garza, 2002).

Meijer et al. (2006) note the need for positive teacher attitudes and for teachers to create a 'sense of belonging' to support effective inclusive practice and Cook (2002) and Silverman (2007) point out that teachers' attitudes and beliefs directly affect their behaviour with students and so have a great influence on classroom climate and student outcomes. Ainscow (2006) stresses that any teaching is likely to be ineffective where students subscribe to a belief system that regards some students as being 'in need of fixing' or worse, as 'deficient and therefore beyond fixing'.

Pre-service teacher education must, therefore, be concerned with the promotion of teacher attitudes as well as instructional competences (Andrews, 2002; Reinke and Moseley, 2002). Pearson (2007) notes that the complexity of inclusive education should be accommodated by the inclusion of work on attitudes and beliefs in teacher education rather than '*relying solely on a technician, competency-oriented approach (Edwards et al., 2002) which is better suited to the transmission of bureaucratic and procedural knowledge*' (p. 31).

Pearson (2009) says that teacher education is a context in which changes in attitudes, beliefs and values do occur. Atkinson (2004) and Forlin et al. (2009) note that if the negative attitudes of pre-service teachers are not addressed during initial teacher education, they may continue to hamper the progress of inclusive education efforts in schools.



Training in special / inclusive education has consistently been found to have influenced educators' attitudes (Campbell et al., 2003; Cook, 2002) either in a single course (Avramidis and Norwich, 2002; Shade and Stewart, 2001; Subban and Sharma, 2006; Sharma et al., 2006; Pierson and Howell 2006; Tubele, 2008) or through a content-infused approach (Sharma et al., 2006; Voltz, 2003).

Lancaster and Bain (2007) agree that in general, there is a positive change in attitudes after undertaking an inclusive / special education unit of study and this is the case across a number of contexts and countries (Ching et al., 2007; Kyriakou et al., 2007). They suggest that some type of formalised input is sufficient to increase the awareness of general education pre-service teachers. However, Molina (2006) found research evidence to demonstrate that theoretical classes and reading are not sufficient to modify teachers' and students' negative attitudes towards pupils with special educational needs. This is in agreement with many other researchers (Campbell et al., 2003; Forlin et al., 1999; Tait and Purdie, 2000).

Loreman et al. (2007b) conclude that if pre-service teachers are going to develop positive attitudes towards inclusive education, they need opportunities for direct interaction with people with disabilities, instruction on policy and legislation relating to inclusive education, and opportunities to gain confidence in practical teaching situations with students with disabilities. Boling (2007) suggests that teacher educators should use case methodology to encourage individuals to reflect upon and possibly change their prior assumptions and beliefs. Johnson and Howell (2009) also show that attitudes are amenable to change through a course and an assignment that involve the analysis of case studies in inclusive education.

Elhoweris and Alsheikh (2006) suggest that attitudes can be improved by increasing students' knowledge about learners with disabilities and ways to meet their learning needs and suggest that teacher education programmes may need to include more alternative learning styles and instructional strategies. They propose the use of successful inclusive teachers and individuals with disabilities as guest speakers (Salend, 2001) and the use of disability simulation. Lambe (2007) found that successful teaching practice in the non-selective sector had the most positive influence on perceived competency and on general attitudes towards inclusion.

Other approaches are discussed in the literature in terms of providing pre-service teachers with increased opportunities to explore their attitudes. Forlin and Hopewell (2006) used a case study of a mother of a child with high support needs as a stimulus for reflection. Carroll, Forlin and Jobling (2003) provided increased opportunities for interaction with people with disabilities in tutorials, including watching videos and participating in a 'buddy system' at schools. Miller (2008) sent teacher education students to interview diverse learners about their views on school placement which led to an increased awareness of the need to consider different viewpoints. A study by Yellin et al. (2003) however, concluded that mere exposure to students with additional needs may not be enough to change attitudes in a positive way – it is the quality of experiences which produces real change.

Campbell et al. (op. cit.) provided a one semester course on human development and education and field work with learners with Down Syndrome. Following this, students felt significantly less discomfort, uncertainty, fear and vulnerability when interacting with people with disabilities. They also reported feeling less sympathy, an outcome also noted by Tait and Purdie (2000) which may indicate a more relaxed approach to disability as opposed to an overly sympathetic view.



To enable pre-service teacher education to properly address the issue of inclusion it is critical to provide accurate ways to measure the impact of teacher training programmes on the development of more positive attitudes and feelings towards children with disabilities and reduced concerns about inclusive education. Loreman et al. (2007a) developed a modified version of the *Interactions with People with Disabilities* scale (IPD) (Forlin, Jobling and Carroll, 2001).

A Multidimensional Attitudes Toward Inclusive Education Scale (MATIES) (Mahat, 2008) was developed to measure affective, cognitive and behavioural aspects of attitudes to inclusive education, using a theory of planned behaviour based on the work of Ajzen (1991). Mahat suggests that the attitudes of mainstream teachers toward the inclusion of students with disabilities are influenced by past experiences (previous experience with teaching students with disabilities), previous knowledge (training in the field of inclusive education) and newly acquired knowledge (professional development or training modules).

Debate about how to best prepare teachers for inclusive classrooms may usefully begin with understanding how teacher beliefs are integrated within the classroom (Taylor and Sobel, 2001). A study by Sanches-Ferreira (2007) underlines the importance of beliefs in the way teachers perceive models of teaching children with special educational needs and raises the need for further research about the relationship between the teacher's beliefs and classroom behaviour.

Boling (2007) highlights the need for teacher educators to ensure that their interactions with teacher candidates do not give the impression that there is one 'proper' way to think about inclusion. They need to build trust and encourage students to challenge prior assumptions and beliefs. Teacher candidates must not be led to believe that there is a single answer, or a single strategy, for supporting students and need to understand that no single model of education can ever truly make a classroom inclusive (Kumashiro, 2000).

Mintz (2007) suggests that beliefs, attitudes and values are not easily dealt with in large lectures and require small group seminars and discussion. Garman (2005) suggests that student attitudes are often autobiographical and, although complex, are also fluid. He writes that 6 key factors may be associated with changing pre-service values and beliefs: the dispositions of openness, self-awareness / self-reflectiveness and commitment to social justice and inter-cultural, educational and support group experiences.

Silverman (2007) found that some pre-service teachers believe that teaching is merely a set of discrete skills learned in a straightforward way and that they will be adequately prepared to teach once told what to do. He suggests that teacher educators should implement training approaches that build beliefs in gradual, 'effortful' learning, that make clear the benefits of inclusion for all students. In acknowledging individuality in education, teachers should become aware of the fact that personal experience and history shape a teacher's own learning processes and the way they see their school and their professional future (Casanova, 2006).

The General Teaching Council in England (2008) notes the following beliefs that impact on teachers' ability to promote pupil learning:

- Whether a pupil's ability to learn is fixed or can be changed;
- Whether learners benefit more from working with others or from working individually;
- Appropriate ways to respond to learners' mistakes and how this might encourage or discourage them from taking risks;
- The promotion of positive beliefs amongst pupils.



They say that teachers' beliefs can be changed through action research, by coaching and by analysing video footage of their own teaching.

NCATE (2002) define dispositions as '*values, commitments and professional ethics that influence behaviour towards students, families, colleagues and communities and affect student learning, motivation and development as well as educators own professional growth*' (p. 53). Five dispositions have been suggested by Usher (2002). These are empathy, a positive view of others, a positive view of self, authenticity and meaningful purpose and vision. McKnight (2004) believes that a code of ethics is the key to dispositions and this is further supported by Burant, Chubbuck and Whipp (2007). Guðjónsdóttir and Dalmau (2002) studied the interaction between theory, practice and ethics in preparing responsive professional educators and noted the need to take account of the unique knowledge and experience that teachers bring to educational discourse.

Fletcher and Pascoe (2008) describe changes taking place in New Zealand, where teachers are being encouraged to make a pedagogical shift to one of being partners in learning with students. As part of this shift, educators at both system and school level consider and articulate their values and beliefs prior to 'negotiating and blending' these with those of others in the education community. Rather than a shift in practice, Fletcher and Pascoe noticed a '*way of being*' that is '*essential to inclusiveness for educators*'.

Inclusive values are concerned with issues of equality, rights, participation, learning, community, respect for diversity, trust and sustainability, compassion, honesty, courage and joy (Booth and Dyssegaard, 2008). Seeing values as 'fundamental guides and prompts to moral action', Booth and Dyssegaard state that in education, an understanding of the values which give rise to our actions is essential if we are to 'do the right thing'.

Alexander (2008b) identifies five versions of teaching that have common currency internationally. These are teaching as: transmission; initiation; negotiation; facilitation and acceleration. These pedagogical positions can all be tracked to founding ideas and influences in various national education systems and movements and are 'buttressed' by three 'primordial values' which are '*concerned with that most fundamental human question, the relationship of humans to each other and to the communities and societies they inhabit: individualism, community and collectivism*' (p. 182).

Carini (2001) suggests that '*humanness and the valuing of humanness*' is the starting point for education (p. 1). Such a view does not tolerate a '*limited and limiting curriculum or pedagogy for any child*' (El-Haj and Rubin, 2009, p. 452). The development of inclusion requires us to make explicit values that underlie actions, practices and policies. This highlights the need within teacher education to develop 'literacy', to think about, discuss and act on these values. Stipek et al. (2001) comment that teacher professional development that emphasises either beliefs or practices alone, without linking the two together, is likely to fail.

## 6.4 Pedagogy

Alexander (2008a) writes that culture is '*so pervasive a shaper of education and educational realities that it cannot possibly be ignored*' (p. 19). Pedagogy reflects the values of individual teachers and the wider culture and Alexander points out that this is a long way from the simplistic 'inputs', 'outcomes' and 'processes' which usually make up pedagogical quality indicators. Alexander defines pedagogy as '*the observable act of teaching together with its attendant discourse of educational theories, values, evidence and justifications. It is what one needs to know, and the skills one needs to command, in order to make and justify the many different kinds of decisions of which teaching is constituted*' (p. 29).



Florian (2007) writes that teachers need to understand difference accounted for as an essential aspect of human development in any conceptualisation of learning. She adds that teachers need to be disabused of the idea that they are not capable of teaching all learners. Cochran-Smith (2003) stresses the need to produce teachers who, in addition to knowing what to teach and how to teach, also know how to learn and make decisions informed by theory and research and by feedback from school and classroom evidence in particular contexts.

Ainscow et al. (2007) point to the need to see teacher development as more than simply learning to implement centrally mandated practices. Darling-Hammond (2006) agrees that teachers need to know how and when to use a range of practices to accomplish their goals with different students in different contexts, rather than being subject to the pendulum swings of polarised teaching policies.

Molina (2006) similarly believes that teachers are more than technicians in education sciences – they are professionals in human relationships. While still needing knowledge of education sciences they also need, through experience, to realise that *'knowing is never dogmatic nor finished'* (p. 67).

Davis and Florian (2004b) draw on Alexander's (2004) suggestion that pedagogy is best thought of in terms of knowledge as well as skill. They conclude that although there is a great deal of literature that might be seen as 'special education knowledge', the teaching approaches and strategies themselves are not sufficiently different from those used to teach all children to justify using the term 'SEN pedagogy'. They found that sound practices in teaching and learning in mainstream *and* special education literatures were often informed by the same basic research. They also found that the term 'special education' is often used to refer to the process of making accommodations that does not constitute pedagogy, but is an element of it. They conclude that questions about a separate special education pedagogy are unhelpful given the current policy context and that the more important agenda is about how to develop a pedagogy that is inclusive of all learners.

Lewis and Norwich (2005) argue that for learners with SEN effective practice is not distinctively different teaching, but that more practice, more examples, more experience of transfer and more careful assessment are required. They highlight the value of the continuum concept, saying that differentiation or specialisation can be seen as a process of intensification. Daniels and Porter (2007) note that in the 2005 review by Lewis and Norwich, 'specialist' strategies commonly used with variations for children with dyslexia, dyspraxia, moderate and severe learning difficulties, are also useful for other children. Shulman (1986) introduced the concept of pedagogical concept knowledge – a blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems or issues are organised, represented, adapted and presented for instruction. He noted *'in the face of student diversity, the teacher must have a flexible and multi-faceted comprehension [of subject matter], adequate to impart alternative explanations of the same concepts or principles'* (1987, p. 9).

Rink (2002) states that teachers in inclusive settings must provide the following for their students: developmentally appropriate content, clear instructions for practice, opportunities to practice at an appropriate level of difficulty, opportunities to participate in appropriately designed task progressions and accurate feedback and assessment of subject matter and role performance. While relating to the teaching of physical education, these points show the importance of teachers' skills in creating an interactive and responsive learning environment and managing the learners in achieving multiple learning outcomes.



While it is widely agreed that content knowledge is important, particularly in secondary education (Wilson, et al., 2001; Brownell, et al., 2005), most content related studies have been done in the areas of maths and science and provide little guidance related to teachers in other content areas, or in elementary / primary or special education (Rice, 2003). Although many studies highlight the key role of pedagogical training, they do not provide information on how much or what kinds of pedagogical preparation teachers need, or whether pedagogical knowledge is better developed in a general course (e.g., an instructional strategies course) or as part of content specific courses.

Rix et al. (2006) note the shortage of evidence about the nature of inclusive teaching approaches, although they did find some evidence of the effectiveness of peer group interactive approaches in developing both social and academic participation. Their findings strongly support the idea that teachers who see the inclusion of pupils with SEN as part of their role are more likely to have effective, high-quality and on task interactions with pupils.

Teachers require support to use their pedagogical skills more effectively in different situations to meet the needs of all learners and understand that inclusive practice is about more than 'differentiation'. Hart (2000) developed a framework to support teachers in 'innovative thinking' about learning, suggesting that teachers consider:

- Making connections between contextual and classroom factors;
- Contradicting widely held, normative assumptions;
- Taking a learner's eye view, seeking to understand the meaning of activities;
- Noting the impact of their own feelings;
- Postponing judgement in order to find out more when evaluating a learner's progress.

Ainscow (2007) stressed that teachers need to see what inclusive teaching actually looks like and explore ideas with someone who can help them understand the difference between what they are doing and what they aspire to do. Lipman (1997) cautioned that specific attention is needed on such issues to bring about change – otherwise teachers can collaborate to reinforce existing practice rather than confronting difficulties.

Hart et al. (2004) say that teacher judgements about students' ability to learn may limit their achievement and the 'self-fulfilling prophecy' is likely to continue while teachers plan for the mainstream and adjust or 'bolt on' different programmes rather than planning to meet the needs – and increase the learning capacity – of all learners 'up front'.

The preparation of pre-service teachers to implement an anti-bias curriculum is also key, requiring approaches which develop positive self-esteem for all, empathy and activism in the face of injustice (Derman-Sparks, 1989). El-Haj and Rubin (2009) stress that rather than directing pre-service teachers to align their lessons and curriculum with existing standards, teacher educators should also ask them to analyse the standards in relation to both their inclusive and exclusionary consequences.

Casanova et al. (2006) found that beginning teachers really attend to the learning difficulties encountered by their pupils, but that their '*empirical and inappropriate responses*' appear to be related to a stereotyped idea of what a pupil should be and apparent lack of knowledge of what is involved in the act of learning.

2020 Vision: The Report of the Teaching and Learning in 2020 Review Group (DfES, 2006) points out that any strategy for personalising learning must focus on improving the consistency of high quality teaching to meet learners' needs as effectively as possible. This includes matching high quality teaching to the different and developing abilities of



pupils, breaking down barriers to learning and maintaining high expectations, collaborative relationships which enable all pupils to participate, and use of whole-class teaching as well as one-to-one, paired and group work and open-ended tasks based on specific projects or areas of inquiry.

Hargreaves (2006) outlines nine 'gateways' to personalising learning: student voice; assessment for learning; learning to learn; new technologies; curriculum; advice and guidance; mentoring and coaching; workforce development and school organisation and design.

Regarding culturally responsive pedagogy, Edwards and Kuhlman (2007) say that teacher candidates must know that the process of becoming a culturally responsive teacher is nurtured by living, experimenting, travelling and reading. *'Finished products do not graduate from our institutions and teacher candidates must acknowledge that they are works in progress so that they may continue to develop in their awareness of and ability to enact responsive pedagogy'* (p. 48). However, they suggest that the inclusion of video cases to model both strategies and the teacher thinking required to modify approaches in response to students may support student understandings of specific strategies for culturally responsive teaching.

The European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2009) conclude that schools should have an intercultural policy that fits in with and meets the needs of the local context. They say that such a policy *'would require that mainstream as well as special education teachers increase their knowledge and skills and take advantage of necessary training programmes in order to better understand and then deal in the most appropriate way with multicultural diversity'* (p. 74).

Many pupils report that their experience of school still involves periods of time listening to teachers or copying from the board or a book. Personalising learning involves changing such routines within a broad curriculum that takes account of prior learning and experiences, appropriate curriculum materials, strategies that enable pupils to see clearly how they are progressing, a focus on higher order thinking skills and learning how to learn and group work, peer tutoring, paired and cooperative learning.

Leadbeater (2008) points out that teachers will play a different role in a more responsive and 'personalised system' and need to be able to work with other agencies to meet the needs of each child more holistically.

In conclusion, Hargreaves (2003) says: *'Those who focus only on teaching techniques and curriculum standards and who do not embrace the greater, social and moral questions of their time, promote an impoverished view of teaching and teacher professionalism'* (pp. 160-161).

## **6.5 Teaching practice**

The importance of the practicum in any model of teacher education is stressed by Hagger and McIntyre (2006) who say: *'whatever student teachers need to learn to do as teachers in schools for their future careers, it is in schools that they need to learn to do these things'* (p. 65).

They put forward the view that student teachers' school-based learning should be organised as a planned curriculum with carefully designed diverse learning experiences to develop appropriate expertise, rather than largely incidental learning occurring through participation in the teaching work of the school. They stress the need for pre-service teachers to learn to engage in *'serious and informed intellectual analysis'* of their teaching



and how it can be improved as something which they do in schools and not 'practical theorising' based on school experience carried out back at university.

Cook (2007) believes that teaching practice plays a key role in shaping future teaching behaviour, and provides an opportunity to address the research-to-practice gap (see Cook et al., 2003; Boger and Boger, 2000; Cook and Cook, 2004; Mattson et al. 2006). Bridging research and practice can be problematic, as it appears difficult to change teachers' behaviour once their teaching routines have become established (Gersten and Dimino, 2001; Sindelar and Brownell, 2001). If beginning teachers leave student teaching with a strong practical base in the most effective instructional techniques, the need for expensive work to change their practice later will not be needed.

Teacher education programmes need to consider practical placements in schools and classrooms where inclusion has been embraced as a philosophy and in practice and where there is enough appropriate support to ensure a successful experience for pre-service teachers. Jordan et al. (2009) stress the need for practicum experiences in which there are '*opportunities to examine and foster their beliefs*' and then learn about '*how to address the needs of diversity in the classroom*' – a dimension which is neither typically or rigorously addressed in teacher education programmes.

Many researchers have concluded that teacher education programmes lack an organised approach linking courses and field experiences within a conceptual framework resulting in '*incongruence in definition, purpose, and goals for the teaching experience*' (Conderman et al., 2005, op. cit.) This lack of conceptual framework also means that student teachers may be more influenced by the practices of teacher mentors than by college / university courses or supervision. Important factors with regard to student placement such as the climate of the school, the administrative style, the type of classroom, the age and grade level of the students, the educational philosophy modelled by the teachers, the personality of the co-operating teacher, and the structure of the special education classroom (Renzaglia et al., 1997) are largely beyond the control of the university.

Loreman (2010) writes that teacher preparation institutions might consider building elements of what constitutes an inclusive environment into their criteria for selecting a practicum school. He states that although this may be difficult due to a shortage of school placements, '*to simply accept practicum schools because a quota must be filled, regardless of the standard of practice in the school does pre-service teachers (and ultimately children) a disservice*' (p. 62).

From 2010, students enrolled in the Master of Teaching (Primary) at UWS Australia will take part in a subject titled 'Classrooms Without Borders'. Students will work within indigenous, migrant and refugee communities on a variety of projects, including tutoring, mentoring or the development of learning resources to ensure they understand diversity and have the ability to cater for the unique cultural needs of their students. Johnson and Battalio (2008) point out the value of study abroad to gain a richer understanding of cultural differences and ability to interact in a more sensitive way with students from diverse backgrounds.

While available research shows that field experience provides an opportunity to 'learn the profession' and reduces the anxiety of beginning teachers (Rice, 2003), there is little research about the impact of different forms of school experience on the practice of novice teachers and the learning of their students or about the contribution of teaching practice versus the contribution of coursework on the development of knowledge and skills (Rice, 2003; Wilson et al., 2001). Teacher educators also need to ensure that teaching practice is designed and well-focused to meet professional competences and standards (LaMontagne, Kenney and Nelson, 2001).



However, much depends on the practice of the co-operating teacher and Cook (2007) reported that focus group participants stated that the practices used by their 'co-operating teacher' often conflicted with their university training. In these cases, they usually decided to implement teaching strategies used by their co-operating teachers. Better ways to encourage skilled mentor-teachers to be involved are needed and the study also suggests that universities must provide training and support in supervisory and mentoring skills and the use of evidence-based practice to enable interested and suitably skilled teachers to participate.

Stoddard et al. (2006) also found evidence to suggest that, on entering a classroom, induction-level teachers often revert to instructional behaviour used either by a co-operating teacher or use behaviours that exist from memory of their own schooling.

Conderman et al. (2005) raise a further issue, suggesting that supervising teachers do not want to be responsible for hindering the future employment opportunities of students but say that honest, meaningful and forthright feedback is critical in preparing quality teachers.

A further aspect of teaching practice is the time available for university / initial teacher training supervisors to visit students on placement and influence developing knowledge, skills and dispositions and few teacher preparation programmes appear to assess the quality of the university supervisor's supervision (Conderman et al., 2001).

Spandagou et al. (2008) report a significant change in the perception of personal preparedness of students possibly related to the characteristics of the in-school experience component. Lancaster and Bain (2007) found that the one-to-one student mentoring experience resulted in greater gains in self-efficacy when compared with the inclusive classroom support experience or the university-based programme. Opportunities to reflect on success in practical teaching situations can also improve confidence and future success (Loreman et al., 2005).

Research on cognition suggests that practical or situated knowledge (derived from doing) must be acquired before one can competently apply what has been learned (Talvite et al., 2000). Teaching practice therefore, provides an opportunity for future teachers to use and own their knowledge and further develop their abilities and confidence.

Edwards and Kuhlman (2007) believe that service-learning gives teacher candidates the chance to acquire new skills from a typical classroom, rather than an academic simulation. Rowls and Swick (2000) have described four goals for service-learning for teacher candidates: (1) helping them explore education in various teaching-learning contexts; (2) enriching understandings of educational contexts and issues via direct involvement in the school setting; (3) helping them acquire and practice instructional strategies learned through university instruction, and (4) considering service-learning as an instructional strategy.

Carrington and Sagers (2008) developed an inclusive ethical framework which included five principles established following analysis of student service learning reflection logs: collaboration and team work; development of an inclusive culture; the value of respect; learning about the community and developing partnerships and the development of pedagogy informed by experience and empathy with the learners.



## 7. ASSESSMENT OF COMPETENCES AND TEACHER PROFILES

OECD (2005) found that many countries recognise the need for clear and concise statements of what teachers are expected to know and be able to do in teacher profiles embedded throughout the school and teacher education systems. They suggest that the profile of teacher competences needs to derive from the objectives for student learning, and should provide profession-wide standards and a shared understanding of what constitutes accomplished teaching. Teacher profiles, therefore, need to include subject knowledge, pedagogical skills, the capacity to work effectively with a wide range of students and colleagues, to contribute to the school and the profession, and to continue developing. Such a profile can help to align all the elements involved in teachers' development and support work to ascertain whether teacher development programmes are making a difference.

Feyerer et al. (2006) stress the need for schools to convey the competences necessary for living in a diverse and multicultural society to all learners and therefore suggest the following teacher competences and say that the methods used in teacher education must also correspond to these goals that include:

- Open, project oriented and pupil centred forms of education;
- Use and production of new teaching materials, design of learning environments;
- Process oriented support diagnostics and new forms of assessment, feedback and evaluation;
- Reflection and adaptation of one's own values, attitudes and action patterns;
- Intercultural learning, gender education and education of gifted students;
- Interdisciplinary collaboration with other teachers, therapists and institutions within/ beyond school and increased parental involvement;
- Quality assurance and school development (e.g. use of the Index for Inclusion, Booth and Ainscow, 2002);
- Public relations together with all school partners to positively influence public opinions.

Hoover and Patton (2004) list two types of competences needed to differentiate curriculum and instruction: development competence and implementation competence. The first includes among others, process of curriculum development, curricular issues, planning according to age, grade and learning styles, related nature of content, materials, instructional strategies and instructional settings. The second type includes adapting strategies, materials relevant to student needs, collaboration skills, skills to modify and adapt instruction, cognitive strategies and study skills and their use in curriculum.

Muñoz (2009) looks at the competences needed for secondary teacher education programmes and again raises the issue of a theory to practice gap and the need for integration and coherence of knowledge, capacities, dispositions and values and Moran (2009) states that good inclusive teaching goes beyond demonstrating achievement of a given set of competences or standards and requires the values dimension to be made explicit and permeate all aspects of teacher preparation.

Many researchers have drawn attention to the need to take less 'tangible' elements of practice into account – for example, how skills are used and how decisions are made and justified regarding priorities (for example Sanmamed, 2009; Medves, 2006). Chionna



(2006) stresses that in teacher education excellence in the disciplines and methodological competence is not sufficient and that sensitivity and emotional and relational intelligence are essential.

On a practical level, Sigurðardóttir (2008) outlines the crucial components of inclusive practice as follows. Students should:

- a. Become aware of and understand the ethical and political issues associated with inclusion;
- b. Become competent to acquire relevant understanding of their students and figure out how their varied competence calls for the appropriate individual action;
- c. Master situations where they give their student groups different assignments in parallel;
- d. Be able to set a varied group of students tasks, which they can tackle in concert despite their varied abilities;
- e. Master situations where some of the students are tackling criterion referenced tasks (set by the curriculum) while others are grappling with tasks outside the standard curriculum.

Some writers have expressed concern about the use of standards and competences – for example Hodkinson (2009) – who fears that they encourage a ‘technicist approach’ (Pearson, 2007, p. 26) rather than a focus on the values of the pedagogical principles that underpin effective SEN practice.

Rao (2009) says that teacher educators need to prepare teachers for four broader roles involving four forms of collaboration: collaboration-consultation (general education teacher requests services of special education teacher to help generate ideas for addressing an ongoing situation); peer support system (two general education teachers work together to generate ideas); teacher assistance teams (teams that include special educators provide assistance to general education teachers); and co-teaching where general and special education teachers work together to provide service to students.

Other areas frequently included in studies of teacher competences include: differentiation, learner involvement and well-being (Perrenoud, 2008; Vandeputte et al., 2007) working with parents and collaboration (Ambrukaitis et al., 2004). ONFRIH (2009) sets out 10 professional skills required from all teachers, including taking account of diversity, developing IEPs, increasing knowledge and adapting teaching. Further work on competences has been carried out by Heylen et al. (2006), Tancig and Devjak (2006), Hiebert et al. (2002) and Aelterman et al. (2008) discuss a new profile for secondary teachers in Belgium and how it might help teacher education reform.

Regarding assessment in initial teacher education, Conderman (2003) suggests that the use of portfolios can ensure that competences are met. Portfolios are widely recognised as a useful way to gather information and report on student progress. In the Teachers for all Children programme (Stoddard et al., 2006) an on-going professional portfolio aims to ensure that the student has demonstrated competence in the domains of assessment, instruction, classroom management, collaboration, systematic inquiry and professional / ethical behaviour. Portfolio entries include self-reflections, work examples, plans with strategies, resources and summaries of experiences.

Portfolios can support the assessment of ‘softer’ areas such as the affective aspect of being a teacher (Phelps, 2006), collaboration and work with parents as well as academic content and critical thinking, in particular around areas such as multicultural perspectives. Portfolios encourage students to reflect on what went well and what could have been



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improved after any work but dialogue and feedback are essential to maximise student learning.

Orland-Barak and Kremer-Hayon (2001) researched two types of portfolios – product portfolios and process portfolios – and concluded that the portfolio itself probably does not control the quality of reflection, but that discussions and co-operation with others play a very important role. Mansvelder-Longayroux et al. (2007) point out that student teachers generally already ask the ‘what works’ and ‘how can I’ questions, but that portfolio supervision should aim to encourage them to ask the ‘why’ questions.

For this reason, the portfolio process, although more authentic, is likely to be more labour intensive for tutors than traditional exams. To decrease subjectivity, handbooks and other specific evaluative criteria may be introduced. Initial teacher education institutions need to consider modelling a range of assessment techniques to take account of learner diversity within their own courses, for example, reflective journals, staff and peer observations, video recordings etc.





## 8. TEACHER EDUCATORS – MODELS OF INCLUSIVE PRACTICE?

The OECD project (2010) 'Educating Teachers for Diversity' found surprisingly little knowledge on how teacher educators themselves are prepared for the challenge of diversity. They found that in many countries there appeared to be 'minimal oversight' on who can become a teacher educator, with ill-defined courses of study.

Cochran-Smith (2004) says that many teacher educators have not had the transformative learning experiences necessary to challenge the assumptions underlying teacher education programmes. Merryfield (2000) explained that one of the reasons why teachers are under-prepared for diversity is the lack of knowledge, experience, commitment and understanding of faculty members who teach teachers.

Forlin (2010) notes that a lack of formal induction into the role of teacher educator may make transition difficult for many novice teacher educators. She adds that teaching experienced and pre-service teachers is a completely different skill to teaching in schools requiring '*deep understanding of teaching and of oneself as a teacher educator*' (Swennen and van der Klink, 2008, p. 221). Furthermore, many teacher educators will have attended traditional – often academic / grammar – schools and will have had little contact with peers with diverse needs. In addition, they are often required to focus on aspects other than teacher education practice such as curriculum development or research (Korthagen and Lunenberg, 2004) which increase time pressures.

Given that teacher educators have great impact on both teacher candidates and the learners they will teach (Killoran et al., 2004), it is critical for them to develop a self-awareness of culture, bias, and discriminatory practices as well as to examine the effects of their beliefs, attitudes, and expectations on teacher candidates. Cushner (2006) also says that teacher educators should consider how they position themselves regarding diversity before engaging with others.

Teacher educators must be in a position to confront the knowledge and experiences which prospective teachers bring to their learning and be able to engage in dialogue about complex issues of culture, language, disability and inclusion. West and Hudson (2010) point out that work related to addressing the needs in these areas cannot simply involve the creation of new courses. They suggest that the change process must engage early career teachers in conversations about their experiences that generate information to transform ITE.

Bondy et al. (2007) stress that teacher educators must employ diverse approaches to learning for their students. As teacher education students ultimately will become teachers of diverse learners, teacher educators must be explicit about this aspect of teaching and learning.

Many researchers highlight the importance of modelling reflective practice to support pre-service teacher learning (Brownell et al., 2005; Hudson-Ross and Graham, 2000) and Sharma (2010) stresses that reflective practice, among other approaches '*requires academics to practice what they preach*' (p. 109).

Teacher educators not only have the role of supporting student teachers' learning about teaching, but as stated above, they also model the role of the teacher. Korthagen, Loughran and Lunenberg (2005) say that here the teacher education profession is unique: '*During their teaching, doctors do not serve as role models for the actual practice of the profession i.e., they do not treat their students. Teacher educators, conversely, whether intentionally or not, teach their students as well as teach about teaching*' (p. 588).



They continue: *'the way teacher educators model the promotion of certain views of learning could be a more important factor in shaping teacher behaviour than the content of the messages they are sending, despite inherent differences between the university and school contexts'* (p. 588).

While there is little literature on this subject, Korthagen et al. found four forms of modelling: (1) implicit modelling, which seems to have a low impact; (2) explicit modelling; (3) explicit modelling and facilitating the translation into the student teachers' own practice; (4) connecting exemplary behaviour to theory.

Their findings confirm that some teacher educators apparently lack the knowledge and skills needed to use modelling in a productive way, to make their own teaching explicit, and to rethink the connection between their teacher education practices and public theory. They also found that experience as a teacher educator does not necessarily lead to more or better modelling and suggest that teacher educators work together and question each other during lessons and analyse each other's practice to deepen their knowledge. Pugach and Johnson (2002) say that teacher educators ought to develop experiences for pre-service teachers that provide them with ways to understand school collaboration as more than simply achieving good communication.

McHatton and Daniel (2008) suggest that implementing co-teaching at the pre-service level forces a paradigm shift and changes the way courses are delivered with collaborative teaching across disciplines. Nevin et al. (2009) reviewed collaborative teaching for teacher educators and concluded that there is no curriculum for teacher educators to become co-teachers with others in higher education and no information about how department chairs or deans might work together to establish a culture to support co-teaching.

Bartolo et al. (2007) also found during collaborative work to develop the Differentiated Teaching Module (primary) (DTMp) that teacher educators needed to focus on their learners taking a holistic / constructivist approach to learning in higher education. Other key factors included: the need for tutors to develop their own openness to diversity as enrichment and to challenge student assumptions and a recognition of the importance of reflection in as well as on action (Schon, 1983).



## 9. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In conclusion, Loreman et al. (2007b) stress that pre-service teacher education is vital to the continued development and success of inclusive educational practices (Dev, 2002; Loreman et al., 2005). Florian (2009) asks whether teacher education can respond to the challenge of diversity without relying on different kinds of programmes and services for different types of pupils and therefore whether it is possible to develop more equitable ways of working in schools through the reform of teacher education. Darling-Hammond (2006) however, provides a succinct summary of the common features that *'help programs confront many core dilemmas of teacher education'* (p. 41):

- A common, clear vision of good teaching permeates all course work and clinical work.
- Well-defined standards of practice and performance are used to guide and evaluate coursework and clinical work.
- Curriculum is grounded in knowledge of child and adolescent development, learning, social contexts and subject matter pedagogy, taught in the context of practice.
- Extended clinical experiences are carefully developed to support the ideas and practices presented in simultaneous, closely inter-woven coursework.
- Explicit strategies help students (1) confront their own beliefs and assumptions about learning and students and (2) learn about the experiences of people different from themselves.
- Strong relationships, common knowledge, and shared beliefs link school-and university based faculty.
- Case study methods, teacher research, performance assessments and portfolio evaluation apply learning to real problems of practice.

The last word comes from disabled young people themselves, who in the Lisbon Declaration (Soriano et al., 2008) said: *'Teachers need to be motivated, to be well informed about and understand our needs. They need to be well trained, ask us what we need and to be well co-ordinated among themselves'* (p. 22).

The Agency Teacher Education for Inclusion project aims to support such practice, contributing to the development of teachers equipped with the competences needed for inclusive education. As Cochran-Smith points out: *'teaching and teacher education for social justice are fundamental to the learning and life chances of all teachers and pupils who are current and future participants in a diverse democratic nation and who are able both to imagine and work towards a more just society'* (p. 5).





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