

Inclusive Practice in Teacher Education: Differentiation to support diverse learning needs

DR ROBYN BENTLEY-WILLIAMS, DR THERESE BARRINGTON
& DR JO WINCHESTER
AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY, STRATHFIELD
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Setting the Context

- ▶ Welcome and introductions
- ▶ The back story: collaborating & funding
- ▶ Purpose:
 - prepare work-ready graduates for student diversity
 - build university-school partnership
 - give a voice to pre-service teachers & school leaders
 - benefit ACU staff's & students' understanding - **Australian Professional Standards for Teachers**, specifically
 - Standard 1.5: '*Differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across a full range of abilities*' and
 - 1.6: '*Strategies to support full participation of students with disability*'.

Research Aims



To identify qualities in pre-service teachers to enhance employability by examining work-integrated learning across the disciplines.



To examine the practices of the selected schools in catering for diversity.



To explore new ideas and ways of developing pre-service teachers' knowledge, skills and differentiated teaching practice to meet the educational needs of students with disabilities effectively.

Research procedures

Participants:

The **preservice teachers** who volunteered for this unique enrichment opportunity were in an Initial Teacher Education course, Year 2 BEd Primary EDFX242 Education Studies and Professional Experience 2: Building Positive Relationships (15 days)

The **leaders** of the schools

Data:

Gathered through semi-structured 30-45 minutes interviews conducted by Research Assistant

Interview questions

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What is your understanding of differentiated teaching in this context?

In what ways does the school differentiate in the way they cater for diversity?

How do the teachers cater for student diversity?


What ways have you learnt to cater for diversity in your professional experience in the school?

What do you see as your qualities in catering for diversity?

What advice would you give to other ACU pre-service teachers?

What advice would you give to ACU teacher educators regarding preparing pre-service teachers in catering for diversity?

Do you think there were any benefits for you personally and professionally?



“I believe that all students are capable to get to wherever the curriculum is going or what other students would be doing with or without disabilities.

If they're not getting there, the least dangerous thing to do is to look in the mirror and say that I am not doing something.

It's okay, I'm not going to beat myself up over it as long as I'm willing to try something new... Once a teacher truly believes that, they'll keep trying.”

(Leader 2)

**What did the
leaders say
about
inclusive
practice?**

► What did the preservice teachers learn about inclusive practice?

“I make it engaging from beginning to end.”
(PST 1)

“You have to know each student and be aware of what makes them tick.”
(PST 2)

“What they do means something”
(PST 3)

- ✓ Make inquiry, questioning and thinking explicit
- ✓ Use concrete approaches, prompting hierarchies, reflective practice
- ✓ Differentiate assessment to allow students to show what they know

▶ What did the preservice teachers learn about teachers who have effective differentiated practice?

“I'm going to encourage you, it may take a little longer than other students, but that's okay.” (PST 3)

Desirable qualities

- ✓ Persistence
- ✓ High expectations
- ✓ Personalised learning
- ✓ Reflective practice



““ *I think you have to approach this from a very, from a ground zero approach, every single time you get a new student, to actually individually know them.*
(PST 3)

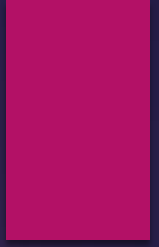
””

- ✓ Problem solving
- ✓ Theory to practice



““ *Sometimes it just doesn't click
until you see it in person.*
(PST 2) ””

**Formation through work-
integrated learning**



“ It’s given me the opportunity to understand what they do means something. (PST 2) ”

✓ Developed understandings of differentiation



Model: Formation of pre-professional identity in inclusive practice through work-integrated learning

Questions for practitioners



What are the implications in your school?

How can leaders, special education teachers and class teachers progress these beliefs, attitudes and inclusive practices?

How can you include parents and the community in the inclusive practices?



Questions for teacher educators

What are the implications in teacher education?

**How can diverse WIL contexts
support differentiation?**

**What are the implications for
further research?**

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