Towards
Results in
Education &
English

Inclusive Teaching Practice

Facilitator's Guide

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Module 12:
Identifying specific learning difficulties

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Overview

This is the **twelfth of fifteen modules** that look at how we create a positive Inclusive Learning Environment for all. You will see how inclusive teaching practices encourage, develop and use the 21st century skills of critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity. These modules are for any educators or those studying in education in Myanmar. The terms student and learner are used interchangeably throughout the module.

Module number	Module title
1	What is an Inclusive School, Classroom and Teacher?
2	Knowing your learners
3	Planning learning outcomes for all
4	Participating through learner centred approaches
5	Creating a positive learning environment
6	Effective questioning and feedback
7	Active participation
8	Peer, cooperative and collaborative learning
9	Supporting students' emotional and social wellbeing
10	Legal framework and policies around Inclusion in Myanmar
11	Supporting all students through differentiation
12	**Identifying specific learning difficulties**
13	Supporting all learners with differences or disabilities
14	Positive behaviour management
15	Assessment for student achievement

Learning Journal

Please ensure all participants are aware of the learning journal and its purpose for the module. Point them to the advice given in their participants' copy of the best way to complete. All answers to activities need to be written in their journal. Remember, reflection is an important part of the learning process and a worthy activity alone. Encourage participants to make a note of new and interesting words/phrases/terms as they make their way through the module.

Study tips

It is important to explain how to approach completing the module. Participants need to take their time, develop a suitable timetable and where possible check their answers with colleagues. The use of think / pair / share is a good way for them to collaborate, share ideas, ask questions, check their work, and give feedback.

Background to the Inclusive Practice CPD modules.

There are 3 key themes explored in the modules that reflect the educational reform taking place in all education settings: Inclusion, Gender Equity and 21st century skills. These themes are key in all areas of curriculum, and vital not only for Myanmar's educational ambitions and sustainable development but equally vital for the global future.

This course has been designed to help participants engage in this discussion by challenging their **beliefs and attitudes** about their own teaching, their students' learning and the impact their educational institution has on inclusion. It is expected that as a facilitator, you will challenge their beliefs and attitudes throughout the modules.

It is also important for you as a facilitator to embed many of the teaching and learning techniques associated with inclusion in education into this course. Encourage participants to work at their own pace and consider their own abilities, interests and skills.

The modules look at how we create a positive Inclusive Learning Environment for all. You will see how inclusive teaching practices support gender equity and encourage, develop and use the 21st century skills of critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity.

Each module is made up of a series of activities participants can work through at their own pace. Once they have completed the module, they will have a multiple-choice quiz to complete.

Learning outcomes for Module 12

By working through this module, you will be able to:
1. **Identify and describe what learning difficulties are.**
2. **Explore the different categories of learning difficulties. e.g communication, social and emotional, sensory and physical, cognitive, etc.**
3. **Demonstrate an understanding of the impact of learning difficulties in the classroom.**
4. **Explore the Universal Design for Learning approach to plan how you represent, express and engage learners.**
5. **Reflect on the steps to take if you have concerns about a student.**

In this **twelfth module,** continue to encourage the participants to think about what inclusion means to **them**, **why** we need inclusion and **what** the features are of an inclusive **educational institution** and **teacher**.

The activities in the module will take them approximately 7 hours to complete. This module looks at definitions and examples of learning difficulties. It focuses on identifying specific learning differences that may act as barriers to learning in the classroom; for example communication, social, emotional, physical and cognitive. The following module (13) will explore ways in which teachers can respond and support any needs they have identified. The two modules should be used together.

Extra instructions for the activities in module 12

Activity	Additional points to consider
Prior knowledge assessment	The first task is a recap assessment of module 11. This reminds the learner of the previous module contents and helps them to recall important information in preparation for this module. After the first attempt, suggest the learners refer to the module to check their answers. Discuss any ways that the learning from Module 11 has been used to differentiate learning outcomes for students. What impact has this had on teaching and learning?
Introduction	Ask participants what they understand around identifying specific learning difficulties. This may be a new concept for the participants and so encourage open questions. Remind them that no thoughts, comments of questions are wrong. Briefly cover the learning outcomes of this module and explain that they will be learning how to identify specific learning differences that may act as barriers to learning in the classroom.
1st Self- assessment	Some participants may need encouragement to be honest in their self-assessment. The results from this self-assessment will be compared to another self-assessment at the end of the module, allowing participants to make comparisons and reflect on their learning.
1.1.1 – Link to previous learning	Ask participants to look at activity 1.1.1. which asks them to reflect on differentiating the learning for students and the factors to be considered. This links back to module 11. Participants should note down the subheadings in their learning journal and think about things to consider when differentiating learning. Review the answers.
2 – What is a learning difference, difficulty, or disability?	Review the definition and explanation with the group. Note down any words or concepts that might be new or challenging and highlight the crossover in term usage. Be sure to emphasise that no individuals are the same and the concept of a spectrum. Recap the importance of being sensitive and using appropriate language. Ask for reflections or questions from the group and encourage notes to be taken in the learning journal. Move onto Activity 12.1 and show the video – Learning difficulty or disability? There may be new words in the videos, so you consider the benefits of playing it a few times. Provide pairs or groups of participants with the definitions provided and invite them to explain the terms verbally to each other. Encourage participants to write their own definitions in their learning journals. Move onto a discussion focused on how Learning disabilities are often confused with learning difficulties. In small groups, ask participants to review the questions.
2.1 – Different categories of learning difficulties	Explain to participants that this is more theory about learning difficulties and that there are 4 categories. Remind participants that it is only health professionals who can test and diagnose specific learning difficulties. In this module, participants may think that the students they teach have similar difficulties. It is important that they consider the strategies that might support rather than try to diagnose a student.
2.2 – Cognition and learning difficulties	Ask participants to review the information about cognition, profound and multiple learning difficulties and specific learning difficulties.

	Watch the video on dyslexia and ask participants to respond in small groups to the questions. Bring to plenary and ask participants to discuss what strategies are used by educators to support students. Read the information about dyslexia and encourage participants to makes notes in their learning journals, especially around how to support students. Complete the same process with dyscalculia. Ask participants if they use or can think of additional support that could be provided.
2.3 Sensory and Physical difficulties 2.4 Communication and interaction	Ask participants to review the information about sensory and physical difficulties. Specifically focused on dyspraxia. Participants should complete the table in their learning journal. Complete activity 12.3 – Understanding Autism – and complete the fill the gap activity. If required, play the video again to ensure participants complete the activity. Ask if they have any questions or ask them to reflect on how they can use this information to support any students they teach.
2.5 – Social and emotional difficulties.	Move participants onto the challenging behaviour which may or may not indicate social and emotional difficulties. Introduce ADD and ADHD. Review the information provided and complete the table outlining how to support students. Module 14 explores behaviour more generally so this could be a good way to start the conversation around what participants' feel their role is in setting expectations for behaviour or how they respond to it.
3 – Teacher expectations	Highlight to participants the role that teacher expectations play in the learning and behaviour of students. Ask for examples about a time when we might have limited our students by limiting our expectations. Maybe educators can think of a time when their teacher had low expectations of them, and how it made them feel. Discuss the impact it can have on how students participate and achieve in class. Complete activity 12.4 – Learning difficulties. Give participants time to think about any students they might have taught who had similar difficulties with learning. This is a good halfway point to stop and check for understanding of the difficulties and disabilities discussed so far. Participants could work in groups to match the description to the name, or they could write their own descriptions, creating a mind map or a presentation about how they might support students who display these behaviours.
4- Learning difficulties in a traditional learning environment	Review the information, especially the challenges that a traditional learning environment might highlight. You can ask students to role play disruptive behaviour in a traditional class environment and how challenging it is for both students and teachers to focus and learn. Move onto Activity 12.5 – Understanding needs. You could ask participants to watch the video before the session and for them to bring ideas or questions to discuss. Ask participants how they might facilitate a learning activity that would allow them to observe students to identify any potential struggles with participation and learning. Ask participants to share ideas – what would they look for?

5 – Universal Design for learning	Congratulate participants on the vast amount of knowledge that has been covered in this module. Remind participants that they have covered some very scientific terms. Ask them if they can see any patterns in how they should support students with a variety of learning difficulties and disabilities. Would those strategies benefit any other students in the classes they teach? Read through the information about the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach. Participants should note down the main principles in their learning journals. Complete activity 12.6 – UDL task. Discuss the example given and how that might have an impact on that student's ability to participate and achieve. Ensure that participants understand the benefits and challenges of UDL.
6 – Why is it hard to identify some learning difficulties?	Review the text exploring the challenges in identifying some learning difficulties. Highlight the general signs that educators should be looking for. Ask if anyone has any experience of this that they would like to share. Move onto activity 12.7 – Identifying difficulties and supporting students through the case study of Aung Htin. Ask participants for suggestions on how the teacher could support Aung Htin. Review the suggested answers. Encourage participants to make links to students they teach and note down any ideas that have risen from the discussion as a group.
7 – What to do if you suspect a student has a learning difficulty	Emphasise to participants that there might be a variety of reasons that impact changes in a student's behaviour. If, however, they feel that a child is showing a possible learning difficulty or disability, there are steps to be taken. Explore Activity 12.8 – supporting a student with a visual impairment. Participants should reflect on points in small groups and make notes in their learning journals.
8 – Wrap up	Remind participants of the work covered in module 12 by reading through the key points from this module. Participants should reflect and write thoughts into their learning journal.
9 – End of module 12 quiz	Complete the quiz and ensure that all participants understand the correct answers. Encourage participants to complete activity 12.9 and reflect on how they would handle the scenario.
Self-assessment	The self-assessment duplicates the first self-assessment. Ask participants to reflect on their confidence and discuss comparisons between scores.
The 12th promise	Ask participants to think of one thing they will take away from module 12 and make a promise to their learners about what they will improve. Ask them to evaluate that promise and recognise changes (after x weeks). Encourage participants to reflect on any impact that change has had on teaching and learning and how to improve it further. This can be used for an ongoing action plan for development. Participants are encouraged to make a section in their learning journal entitled 'Promises'. There will be a total of 15 promises.

End of module 12 quiz - Answers

Participants can attempt the questions as many times as they like to reach 100% pass. This allows them the opportunity to become confident. **(Answers in bold)**

Q1 – Select the specific learning difficulties from the list below. (Choose 2 answer)
    a) dyslexia,
    b) dyscalculia
    c) lazy
    d) depressed

Q2 – How would you identify a student with possible signs of dyslexia? (Choose 2 answer)
    a) They have trouble holding a pencil so writing is difficult.
    b) Coordination is a struggle, they often bump into furniture when walking in class.
    c) They often spell common words incorrectly.
    d) The student has had trouble with letter reversals.

Q3 – Identify the physical difficulty from the list below (Choose 1 answer)
    a) Autism
    b) Dyspraxia
    c) ADHD
    d) Dyslexia
    e) ADD

Q4 – What does UDL stand for? (Choose one answer)
    a) Universal Design for life
    b) Understand Diverse Learning
    c) Understand Difficulties for Learning
    d) Universal Design for Learning

Q5 – If you identify a student that is having difficulties you should; (Choose 1 answer)
    a) Tell them to work harder and concentrate more
    b) Give them more work to try and catch up
    c) Try to understand the area of difficulty and how best they can support the student
    d) Sit the student with other students who can complete the work for them

Q6 – Which of the following is correct? (Choose 1 answer)
    a) Learning disabilities only occur in childhood
    b) There is only one type of learning disability
    c) Learning disabilities are lifelong
    d) You cannot give students with learning disabilities tests or exams