

Working with the National Framework for Inclusion: a guide for teacher educators

The Scottish Universities Inclusion Group (SUIG)

About this resource

This companion resource accompanies the National Framework for Inclusion 3rd edition and was developed by the Scottish Universities Inclusion Group (SUIG) and edited by Di Cantali (SUIG Chair). SUIG is a working group of the Scottish Council of Deans of Education.

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How to find the National Framework for Inclusion 3rd edition

You can find the Framework at: <https://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-standards/national-framework-for-inclusion/>

Key to abbreviations used in the Framework

SPR: Standard for Provisional Registration

SFR: Standard for Full Registration

CLPL: Standard for Career-Long Professional Learning

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Underpinning beliefs and principles which informed the NFI 3rd edition

As teacher educators, we support the development of inclusive teachers through initial teacher education and career-long professional learning.

Key beliefs reflected in the reflective questions include:

- We are all inclusive educators;
- Recognition that we, and our students, will experience dilemmas and difficulties at points in our professional journeys;
- That inclusion is a continuous journey;
- Diversity should be seen as a strength, and an enhancement, for our classrooms; rather than a deficit;
- Through effective inclusive teacher education, we empower teachers to support all learners to flourish and to work at the 'edge' of their potential;
- Inclusive practice connects different aspects of our practice.

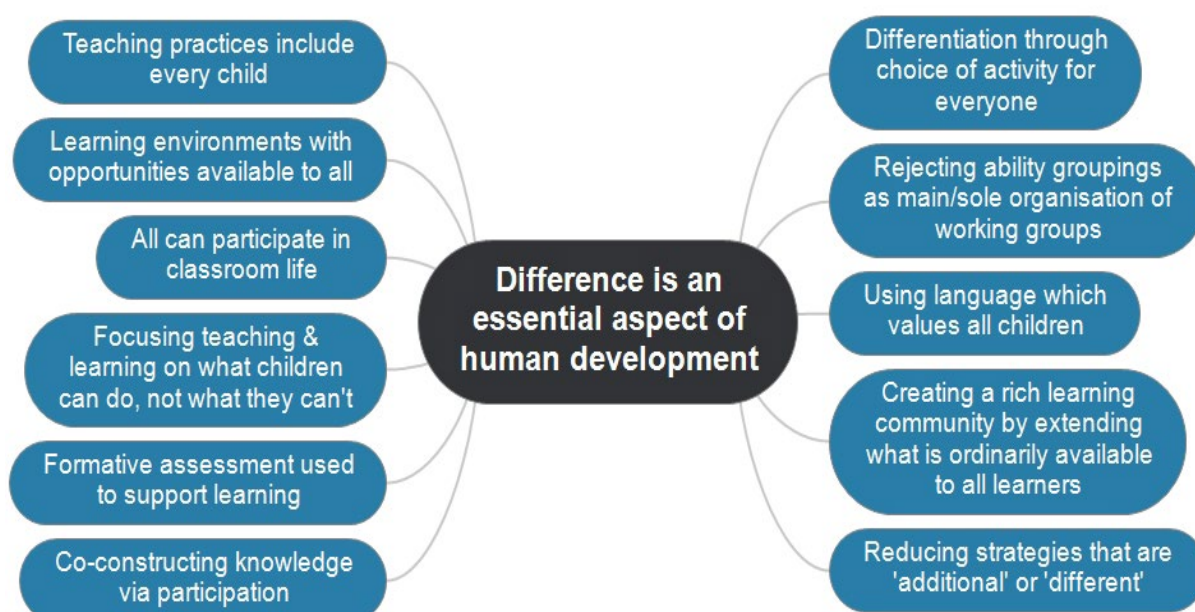
Inclusive Pedagogical Approaches in Action (IPAA) principles

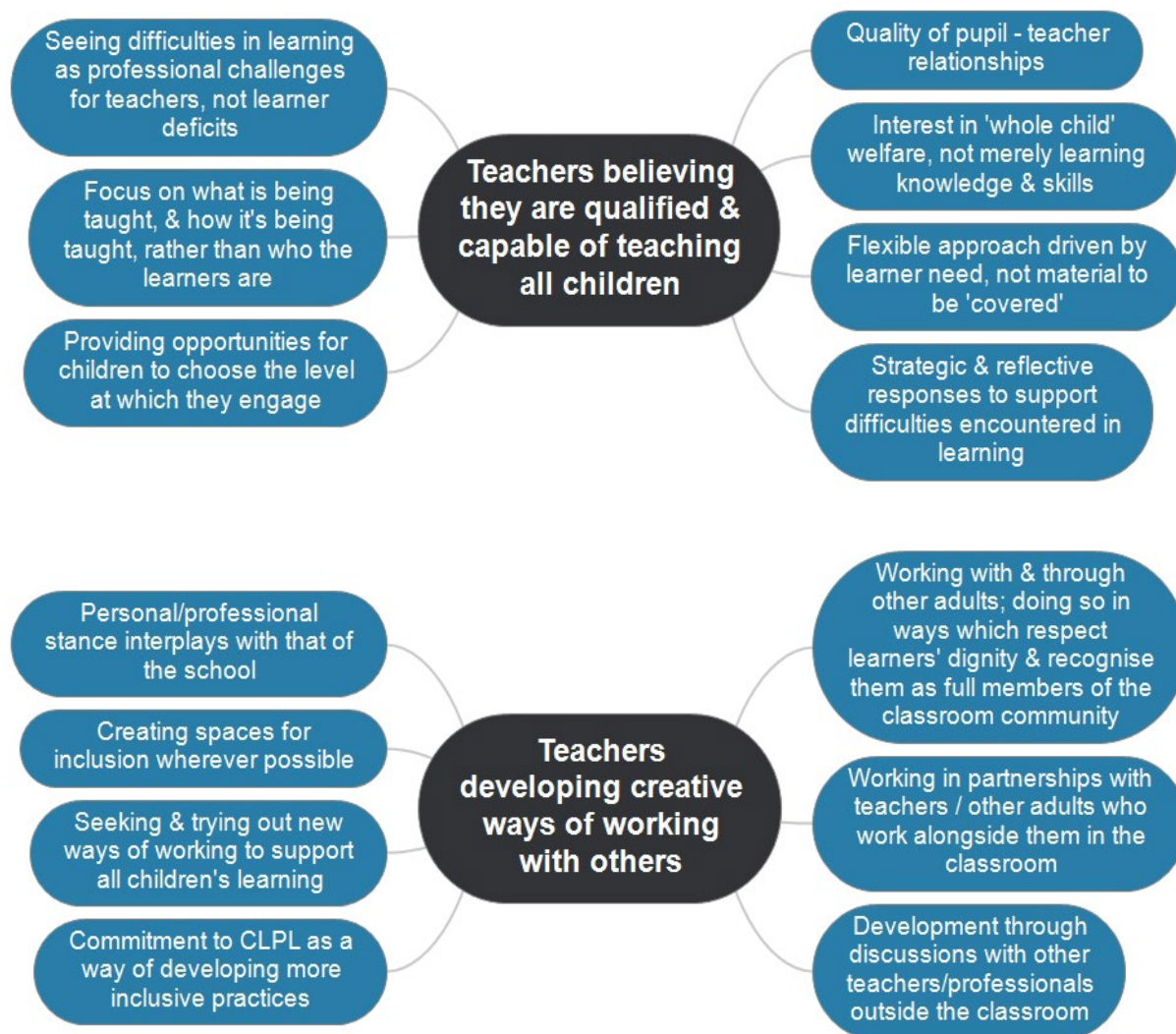
The National Framework for Inclusion is underpinned by the three IPAA principles (Florian & Spratt, 2013).

These are:

- Difference is accounted for as an essential aspect of human development in any conceptualisation of learning;
- Teachers must believe they are qualified **and** capable of teaching all children;
- Teachers continually develop creative new ways of working with others.

In practice, we may see:





Reference:

- Florian, L. and Spratt, J. (2013) Enacting inclusion: a framework for interrogating inclusive practice. *European Journal of Special Needs Education* 28 (2), 119-135.

NFI 3rd edition questions: detailed mapping against GTCS Professional Standards

In this section, both the core questions contained in the NFI and additional questions, which we didn't have room for in the NFI, are mapped against each of the GTCS Professional Standards. Colleagues are invited to consider their students when selecting additional questions to use in their teaching, as some are more appropriate for student teachers whereas others are more appropriate for teachers undertaking Masters level study and similar career-long professional learning opportunities.

Strand 1: Being a Teacher in Scotland

Standard	Core NFI questions (Student teachers)	Core NFI questions (All teachers)	Core NFI questions (Experienced teachers)	Additional questions
1.1: Social Justice	<p>What is it to be human?</p> <p>Do I know and understand the principles of the UNCRC and their interconnected nature?</p> <p>Who is considered to be disadvantaged/marginalised? Who makes these judgements?</p> <p>What is the school's approach to the role of the corporate parent? What does this mean for me, and in what ways does this help to shape my classroom practices?</p>	<p>How do I know that my practice ensures that all learners can meaningfully engage and participate in effective and inclusive educational experiences?</p> <p>How do my relationships with learners reflect a commitment to the Equality Act 2010, The Promise, the ASN Act 2009, and the principles of the UNCRC?</p> <p>How do I support care-experienced learners to have their needs met?</p>	<p>What range of diverse cultural and linguistic funds of knowledge do I draw on to inform my professional judgements for inclusion?</p> <p>In what ways has engagement with diverse cultural funds of knowledge and representations of learners helped to reframe my practice?</p>	<p>How is my decision making informed by the UNCRC concept of the best interests of the child?</p> <p>Who are vulnerable learners? In what ways are all children vulnerable?</p> <p>What assumptions do I bring to the classroom and why? How might I surface and question these?</p>

Standard	Core NFI questions (Student teachers)	Core NFI questions (All teachers)	Core NFI questions (Experienced teachers)	Additional questions
1.1: Trust and Respect	<p>What does it mean to adopt a rights-respecting perspective in my emerging classroom practices?</p> <p>In what ways do I ensure the diversity of learners is valued in my classes?</p> <p>How do I make sense of differences?</p> <p>In what ways does this enhance inclusion and a sense of belonging?</p>	<p>How do I move beyond labels and categories and draw on the rich experiences and strengths of learners to enhance inclusive classroom practices?</p>	<p>What role do I play in ensuring my school maintains a rights respecting culture?</p> <p>How do I acknowledge and negotiate the ethical tensions that emerge in a rights respecting culture?</p> <p>How do my practices acknowledge and negotiate tensions between competing rights?</p> <p>How do they acknowledge and balance tensions between intrinsic and extrinsic values in education?</p>	<p>What are my learners' stories?</p> <p>How do we understand the multiplicity of identities that a child brings to the classroom?</p>
1.1: Integrity	<p>In what ways are my emerging practices inclusive of all learners without stigmatising or marginalising some?</p>	<p>In what ways do I ensure that all learners contribute to the shaping of classroom practices?</p> <p>How does this enhance everyone's sense of inclusion and of belonging?</p> <p>To what extent does this influence the degree to which all learners are allowed to be and become in my classroom?</p>	<p>How do I model an appreciation for the value and dignity of each and every learner?</p> <p>What are my responsibilities to address discrimination when it occurs?</p> <p>What actions do I take to notice, recognise and address discrimination when it occurs?</p>	<p>How does the school, supporting the LA as a corporate parent, promote and engender a rights-respecting culture?</p> <p>How do I advocate for care-experienced learners in my role as their teacher?</p>
1.2	<p>How well do I know my learners?</p> <p>Are some learners more valued than others and, if so, why?</p>	<p>How do I make sense of differences within the context of collegial working?</p>	<p>What further steps can I take to develop my professional judgements and partnerships to enhance the inclusion of all in my classroom and school?</p>	<p>In what ways can I develop a deep knowledge of teaching and learning related to equality, diversity and inclusion?</p> <p>How might I use research evidence with colleagues to inform teacher judgements and next steps for learners?</p>

Strand 2: Professional Knowledge and Understanding

Standard	Core NFI questions (Student teachers)	Core NFI questions (All teachers)	Core NFI questions (Experienced teachers)	Additional questions
2.1 Curriculum and Pedagogy:	<p>What pedagogical theories / practices do I rely on? In what ways do these theories and practices promote or hinder inclusive approaches?</p> <p>How do I respond to learner differences in ways that enable all to participate in learning?</p> <p>How do I ensure a holistic approach to learning and teaching for everyone?</p> <p>How do I use practitioner enquiry and findings from educational research to support inclusive teaching and learning?</p> <p>Whose knowledge and learning is valued? Are some forms of knowledge given greater value than others?</p> <p>How might interdisciplinary approaches to learning enhance participation for learners?</p>	<p>Do I understand how the strengths and limitations of different pedagogical approaches influence / impact / limit learners' learning and participation?</p> <p>What do I know about different theoretical perspectives which privilege certain groups of learners? How do I respond to these?</p> <p>How do I integrate findings from educational research to support inclusive approaches to enquiry?</p> <p>How do I involve diverse communities of learners and other partners in the enquiry process?</p> <p>How do I ensure I enact the curriculum in ways that keep it alive and responsive to real-world challenges, and informed by learners' views?</p>	<p>Are labels and categories sufficient in capturing learners' lived experiences of multiple identities? What alternatives do we have?</p> <p>What are the strengths and limitations of different practitioner enquiry approaches in the context of developing inclusive reflexive practices?</p> <p>How do I critically engage with policy? In what ways are policy guidelines conducive to inclusive approaches? In what ways might they challenge inclusive approaches?</p> <p>How do I work with colleagues to include multiple perspectives to enhance creativity and innovation in practice?</p> <p>How can a wide variety of learning spaces be harnessed to enrich learning for all?</p> <p>To what extent are curriculum, pedagogy and assessment aligned</p>	<p>How do we respond to learner differences holistically, to move away from thinking about 'who' we are teaching, to thinking about 'how' and 'what' we are teaching?</p> <p>What ethical considerations inform my practice?</p> <p>How do policies and legislation promote or inhibit belonging in the school community?</p> <p>How might we identify opportunities in the current curriculum to bridge traditional pedagogies and critical (and new) theoretical perspectives?</p> <p>How can the curriculum be developed in ways that engage learner contribution to curriculum design?</p>

Standard	Core NFI questions (Student teachers)	Core NFI questions (All teachers)	Core NFI questions (Experienced teachers)	Additional questions
			with one another to support inclusive principles?	
2.2 Professional Responsibilities	<p>What are my responsibilities in relation to: equality, social, linguistic and cultural diversity, additional support needs, child protection and wellbeing?</p> <p>Who is represented in the curriculum and by whom? How are they represented? Who is missing?</p> <p>What is bias? How can unconscious bias be surfaced and challenged?</p> <p>Which members of the learning community do I develop and sustain relations with to support inclusion? Which relationships are more challenging to develop, and why? What action might I take to make these relationships more productive?</p>	<p>How do I ensure that I include all the learners I teach? How does this influence how and what I teach?</p> <p>How can I ensure diverse knowledges, views and experiences of colleagues, learners and families are valued and central to planning processes for assessment, teaching and learning?</p> <p>What biases may I have? In what ways might these impact on my practice, and how might I challenge these?</p> <p>How do policies, structures, practices and spaces promote or inhibit inequalities which impact on sense of belonging in the learning community?</p>	<p>In what ways can I share knowledge of inclusive practices to contribute to a flourishing learning community?</p> <p>What is my responsibility as an active bystander? How might I use this role to challenge bias in everyday practice?</p> <p>In what ways does my understanding of inclusive approaches change and evolve in relation to different contexts and learners' perceptions?</p>	<p>What do I understand by 'wellbeing'? How do I promote this in my classroom?</p> <p>How might we engage the wider school and local community in creating an inclusive culture and ethos? How do we facilitate relationships and meaningful connections within the learning community?</p> <p>To what extent do non-traditional educational settings expand the opportunities for learners?</p>

Strand 3: Professional Skills and Abilities

Standard	Core NFI questions (Student teachers)	Core NFI questions (All teachers)	Core NFI questions (Experienced teachers)	Additional questions
3.1 Curriculum and Pedagogy	<p>In what ways does my planning account for all learners' specific needs?</p> <p>How do I address the needs of all learners in a way that takes account of their open-ended capacity to learn?</p> <p>What do I understand attainment to be? How is this valued? Why is it important to have an open-ended view of attainment and progress?</p>	<p>How do I address the needs of all learners to ensure access to and progression in learning?</p> <p>How do I ensure resources are available in a range of contexts to support inclusive practice?</p> <p>Whose voices are taken into account when planning teaching and learning?</p> <p>What assumptions am I making about learners' achievements? How do I challenge them? How do I ensure that I have not pre-judged a learner's capacity to participate?</p>	<p>In what ways might digital technologies create exclusions? How might I address these?</p> <p>How can inclusion support wellbeing? In what ways are my practices reflective of this?</p> <p>Are my practices inclusive of all learners? How do I know? How might I develop my practice to be more inclusive and reflect global diversity?</p>	<p>How do I draw upon learners' prior experiences and knowledge holistically (including funds of knowledge from school, home, community) to create meaningful contexts for learning?</p> <p>How might I develop forms of assessment that develop learner capacities?</p>
3.2 The Learning Context	<p>To what extent can, and do, I use resources and approaches to include all learners? How do these assist inclusion, reflect diversity, and foster equity?</p> <p>How can I access support to address challenges I am facing in promoting inclusion?</p>	<p>How can I create a classroom ethos where all learners are supported and challenged appropriately in their learning?</p> <p>How can I develop opportunities for representation of global diversity in my teaching?</p> <p>What knowledges and resources do I draw from when nurturing learner diversity?</p>	<p>What strategies do I use to facilitate and enhance dialogue with learners and all stakeholders in the learning community, especially in complex situations?</p> <p>How do I provide individual support in ways that ensure everyone participates, makes progress, and achieves?</p>	<p>Are the resources in my classroom and school representative of the learning community who occupy this space? Who is not represented? Why?</p> <p>In what ways does my identity as a teacher (and my own life experiences) influence</p>

Standard	Core NFI questions (Student teachers)	Core NFI questions (All teachers)	Core NFI questions (Experienced teachers)	Additional questions
	<p>How can I develop opportunities for participation, dialogue and learning together?</p> <p>How is a rights-respecting culture reflected in my practices, texts used and other means of communication?</p> <p>How do I make real-world connections related to learning for sustainability in my learning and teaching?</p>	<p>How can I extend opportunities for participation, collaboration and learning together which promote equality, diversity and belonging in my classroom?</p> <p>How do I ensure that my practices align with a rights-respecting culture?</p>	<p>What assumptions do I make about learners' capacity to learn? How might this impact my teaching and engagement with learners?</p> <p>How do I engage learners in sustaining a rights-respecting culture in the learning community?</p>	<p>and shape the learning experiences I plan for my learners?</p>
3.3 Professional Learning	<p>How do I acknowledge and embrace learner diversity in my classroom?</p> <p>What groups of learners may be excluded from my classroom and learning context? Why?</p> <p>How do I begin to create space for conversations and dialogue to facilitate connections between learners and others?</p>	<p>To what extent do I understand and use inclusive pedagogical approaches in my practice? What are the implications of these for my practice?</p> <p>How do I ensure that learners voices are genuinely heard and acted on in the learning community?</p>	<p>What inclusive pedagogical practices do I adopt to reflect real world themes?</p> <p>What evidence-based practices can be used to support every learner?</p> <p>How do I know that I am actively listening to learners /parents / stakeholders and acting upon their insights?</p> <p>How do I integrate diverse disciplinary perspectives and knowledges with the perspectives of learners and families in my practice when working in an interdisciplinary team?</p>	<p>How might my pedagogical choices expand, or hinder, a learner's capacity to learn? Why?</p> <p>When planning for learning and teaching, whose voices are taken into account and why? Are there voices missing, if so, whose and why?</p>

How the NFI is being used in Scottish teacher education: examples from practice

University of Aberdeen

When designing a tutorial about children’s rights, building on a broader discussion about how children and childhood are configured in society generally and within the Scottish education system specifically, the following three questions from the NFI 3rd edition (for student teachers) supported its development:

- *Do I know and understand the principles of the UNCRC and their interconnected nature?*
- *What does it mean to adopt a rights-respecting perspective in my emerging classroom practices?*
- *How is a rights-respecting culture reflected in my practices, texts used, and other means of communication?*

Reflecting on these questions, and in conjunction with further reading, the following question grid was created for the students to stimulate discussion and reflection. The students could choose to focus on one question or engage with several of them.

Can you simultaneously respect the rights of all children (and adults) in the classroom? If so, how? If not, where do the challenges lie?	The UNCRC rights are to be considered as an interconnected ‘whole’ – what opportunities and challenges does this create?	Do children receive more rights as they grow and mature? If so, should this be the case?
Are children’s rights Universal?	Is respecting children’s rights about giving children everything they want (i.e., child as customer)?	How well poised are we in Scotland to advocate for all children’s rights?
Do children enjoy the same rights consistently across all contexts (home, school, community settings)?	What does it mean to adopt a ‘rights-respecting perspective’ in practice? What might that look like?	What types of decisions might children be involved in making when at school? How do you do this in an authentic / meaningful way?

University of Dundee

At the University of Dundee, selected questions from the National Framework for Inclusion are used to encourage initial teacher education students to consider aspects of their inclusive practice, both thinking ahead to future placements and to support them in reflecting on prior professional practice experience. For example, in the third year of the MA (Hons) undergraduate course, teaching about inclusive pedagogy is supported by small group discussion tasks using NFI questions such as:

Discuss, drawing on your own experience of being in school both as a learner and as a student teacher:

'Are some learners more valued than others, and, if so, why?'

You may find it helpful to make some reflective notes after the input which you can return to later in the year, to reflect on how your thoughts and engagement with this challenge question have informed how you approach SPR 1 in your MA3 placement.

A follow-up activity designed to support students in reflecting on their inclusive practice during placement is:

Choose two questions from the Framework for Inclusion, one to be from Section 2 and the other from Section 3. Reflect on them in the light of your placement experiences. How might these inform your aims for next placement?

Queen Margaret University

Students on the ITE course are introduced in a 3rd year course to issues related to equality, diversity and inclusion. The course begins with students being asked a series of self-reflection questions, including:

1. *What does it mean to be human?*

The image below shows student responses to this question.



and

2. *Which of the Professional Standards notes on p.9 of the National Framework for Inclusion 3rd edition (SUIG, 2022) do you feel you need more support with, in the context of this module?*

Each session provides an opportunity for students to explore different questions, ensuring that key concerns that students have are addressed.

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

The Professional Studies (formerly Teacher Education) module in BEd 2 and PGDE has a strong focus on inclusion and social justice. The year is framed as 'understanding learners and learning' and in the first 10 weeks of the year, we dedicate time to exploring policy, practice and engagement with the inclusive education landscape in Scotland. The 10 weeks is a dedicated focus on inclusion where students begin to understand, through critical reflection and discussion with specialists, the roles and responsibilities of teachers and in a more subject specific context as a teacher of Music.

Across the Professional Studies module, students reflect and review key policies related to inclusion in Scotland, including the National Framework for Inclusion. While the National Framework for Inclusion is important as a standalone document, we do not use it in isolation and often use it as one of the core 'suite' of resources and research that help to frame inclusion and inclusive practice in the Scottish context.

This approach has proven to be effective in supporting our students to understand their roles and the range of policies which shape professional responsibilities.

University of the Highlands and Islands

PGDE – Primary course

We take a look at The National Framework for Inclusion during a collaborative, tutor led session. Students are firstly asked to reflect on their own understanding of inclusion and share their thoughts with peers in a supportive environment (small working groups of 4 or 5 students). They are then asked to locate this within the GTCS standards. Students then have the opportunity to explore the Framework itself. Students are invited to read through and discuss the questions in their working groups (and revisit these periodically on their own/with peers throughout their student journey and teaching careers!). This often leads to deep reflection as well as interesting and insightful discussion. Students are supported by a tutor to further enhance thinking / discussion.

Sometimes students will work through the three different standards but often they will look at one set of questions (one standard) in more depth and then share their thoughts as part of a 'jigsaw activity'.

At UHI we set this activity within the broader topic of 'Equality and Social Justice', 'Diversity and Inclusion' and 'Meeting Learners Needs' as weekly themes, but make reference to it at different points throughout the student journey.

BA Food, Nutrition, textiles Education

A similar activity takes place in the third year of our FNTE programme when the students undertake an Education Module entitled 'Enacting the Curriculum'. During their time looking at the CfE and the design principles they complete this activity which is set within the broader topic of 'Equality and Diversity'.

University of Stirling

Students on the ITE course at the University of Stirling are introduced to ideas about inclusion and inclusive pedagogy in the first year of their Educational Studies course. The National Framework for Inclusion (NFI) is used here to prompt discussion in seminars about Scottish policy and practices in schools. The NFI is explicitly revisited in their third year when primary and secondary ITE students study the module *Differences and Identities*. This module focuses specifically on issues regarding inclusion and on students' development as inclusive classroom practitioners. The module is designed to challenge common assumptions and enable students to think critically about social and deficit models of disability, marginalisation, and teacher expectations. The 'student teacher' questions, included in the Framework, provide a basis for discussions about these ideas in seminars.

For example, some of the NFI questions discussed are:

- *'What does it mean to adopt a rights-respecting perspective in my emerging classroom practices?'*
- *'How can unconscious bias be surfaced and challenged?'*
- *'What groups of learners may be excluded from my classroom and learning context? Why?'*

Using the NFI can help students make visible and interrogate practices to consider questions of inclusion and exclusion. More informed understandings and hence decision-making helps promote quality educational experiences for all children and young people in schools, not just some.

University of Strathclyde

The Inclusive Pedagogy module offered at Masters level has sessions designed to address why learners are essential partners for inclusion and how to work with them ethically and creatively. Teacher participants are supported to consider key questions from the NFI when planning their practitioner enquiries (summative assessment), such as:

'In what ways do I ensure that all learners contribute to the shaping of classroom practices?' (1. Being a Teacher in Scotland – SPR);

'How do I involve diverse communities of learners and other partners in the enquiry process?' (2. Professional Knowledge and Understanding – SPR);

and

'How do I engage learners in sustaining a rights-respecting culture in the learning community?' (3. Professional Skills and Abilities – CLPL).

One teacher participant, who was developing well-being strategies for her school, commented that previously she was unaware that the pupils were left out of the process. In her practitioner enquiry, she invited a group of pupils to be co-researchers. They together designed a survey to ensure that the questions would centre pupils' concerns and later analysed the wider responses to inform specific actions the school should prioritise. The NFI, therefore, can be used as an effective tool to facilitate practitioners' engagement with a rights-based approach by fostering pupils' participation in co-creating inclusion.

University of the West of Scotland

‘Inclusion and social justice’ are covered early in the ‘School and Professional Studies’ module in the PGDE (primary and secondary) programme. As part of this input, students are introduced to the National Framework for Inclusion and engage with the 5-step model. As part of individual work, students are encouraged to choose any one of the framework questions that resonates with them and reflect on it. This individual reflection is followed by group work. During this time, students share their chosen questions and reflections with the other members of their group. After the group discussion, students choose one of the questions considered in their group and develop a group response to this one question using the 5-step model recommended in the framework (see example below). Once they have done this, they share their responses with the other groups.

1	Identify strengths	Identifying specific needs of individual, committing to learning more about that need <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commitment to motivating and including all learners - Having experience of working with children from a range of backgrounds; gives knowledge and experience of learning needs, socio-economic difficulties, ACEs etc.
2	Identify issue/problem	Diversity; race, religion, gender, sex and sexuality, Disability. Unconscious bias Sense of belonging Trauma and ACEs
3	Browsing NFI questions	We chose the question <i>‘How do I make sense of differences? In what ways does this enhance inclusion and a sense of belonging?’</i>
4	Critically reflect on specific NFI question	Celebrating differences to make sense of differences; increases knowledge, awareness, acceptance, support. Contributes to a positive culture in the classroom. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How well do you know your learners? Before being able to cultivate a sense of inclusion and belonging we must identify differences. Ensuring we know the right techniques for our learners and their specific needs (including learners with ASN). - This should be taken as a whole-school approach (or, community approach).
5	Work to resolve issue/problem	Awareness that discrimination is learned- we must be prepared to unlearn bias’. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Celebrate differences. - Creating a safe and caring environment. - Pastoral care – working with appropriate agencies to ensure the child is receiving the right care. - CPD, professional training. - Challenging assumptions.

