

**Title:**                    **Understanding and Managing Behaviour: using a problem based approach to teaching, learning and assessment to inspire critical thinking**

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### **Abstract:**

#### **Session Learning Outcomes**

- Evaluate the place of Special Educational Needs specific modules in Initial Teacher Education
- Consider an holistic, systemic approach to the understanding of Social, Emotional and Behavioural Disturbance
- Analyse a problem based approach to teaching, learning and assessment
- Reflect on teaching, learning and assessment in Special Education Needs education, and evaluate the applicability of these approaches in developing reflective, effective practitioners

#### **Session Outline**

An explanation of the genesis of Module EPC202 Understanding and Managing Behaviour: to include the rationale supporting elective modules; the perceived need for greater Special Educational Needs (SEN) input into Initial Teacher Education; and an awareness of student concern of their increased contact with pupils perceived to be Socially, Emotionally and Behaviourally Disturbed, in the current, more inclusive school's context.

Within this inclusive context, an explanation of our intentions and aims will be given. These include a perception that the Standards that trainees engage with in achieving Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) are likely to show an increasing SEN focus; that there is an increasing need to extend student knowledge of what might be included within Special Educational Needs; and to encourage a broader understanding in our students of the possible antecedents, manifestations and causations of disturbing behaviour. A further aim was to allow undergraduate students to gain an understanding of the holistic nature of SEN practice, as part of their development as effective, reflective practitioners. Additionally, the opportunity was taken to consider our practice as tutors in Higher Education, to seek to align teaching and learning to a problem based learning paradigm, and to offer a case study assessment approach that minimises issues of ethical probity.

Pedagogy will be considered from a problem based context. An overview of the wide range of reflective, evaluative, and discovery learning approaches used will be given, supported by student evaluative comments. These approaches were designed to encourage a questioning approach to the material, with an emphasis on student interrogation of their own perceptions, values and ideas.

The assessment strategy used in the module will also be considered. An evolutionary case study approach will be described, involving problem based learning. This example of extended abstract learning allowed each student to synthesise their newly acquired insights, in order to reformulate a working hypothesis. This hypothesis, applied to a database held by course tutors through Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) interrogation, allowed the release of further explicatory materials to build the case study.

## Session Activities and Approximate Timings

The session will be divided into two parts. Firstly, a short presentation of the paper will be given (10 minutes); this will be followed by a discussion based interaction, designed to allow delegates to engage with the ideational basis of the module (10 minutes).

The remaining time will allow delegates to participate in course materials, by utilising some of the exercises, and approaches, used. Four or five activities will be available, that delegates can sample, or spend a more prolonged period engaging with singly.(15 minutes). The final 10 minutes will allow delegates to consider and evaluate the use of these techniques in their teaching and learning environments, with a particular focus on the need to develop inclusive practice, and enhance the student experience in working with SEN

## References

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Macdonald, R. & Savin-Baden, M., (2002), *A Briefing on Assessment in Problem-Based Learning* (online) LTSN Generic Centre Assessment Series @ [www.ltsn.ac.uk/genericcentre](http://www.ltsn.ac.uk/genericcentre) (accessed on 11.08.04)

Finucane et al. (1998) cited in McLean, M (2001) Can we relate conceptions of learning to student academic achievement? *Teaching in Higher Education*, 6:399 - 413

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