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An Introduction to the Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS)

A participant manual for Educators

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Acknowledgements

Department of Basic Education

Sol Plaatje House
222 Struben Street
Private Bag X895
Pretoria 0001
South Africa
Tel: +27 12 357 3000/4082/4084
Fax: +27 12 323-0601

120 Plein Street
Private Bag X9023
Cape Town 8000
South Africa
Tel: +27 21 465-1701
Fax: +27 21 461-8110
<http://www.education.gov.za>
<http://www.thutong.doe.gov.za/inclusiveeducation>

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POLICY ON SCREENING, IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT AND SUPPORT

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Table of contents

Introduction	5
What is in this workshop: Introducing the Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS)	6
Unit 1: Introducing the Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS)	7
Introduction	7
Outcomes.....	7
Resources.....	7
What is the SIAS policy?.....	7
The purpose of the policy.....	8
Related legislation and policies.....	9
Rationale for SIAS policy	10
Addressing barriers to learning and development	11
Determining the support needs of all learners	11
The principles and guidelines underpinning the SIAS policy	12
Competencies related to the SIAS process	13
Unit 2: Level and nature of support	15
Introduction	15
Outcomes.....	15
Resources.....	15
What is support?	15
Shifting focus from the individual learner deficit to the support programme	16
Institutional arrangements for delivery of support	17
Programmes of specialised support: support organisers	22
Levels of support.....	24
Determining a support package also means looking at the context.....	24
Summary.....	25
Unit 3: The process of screening, identification, assessment and support (SIAS).....	27
Introduction	27
Outcomes.....	27
Resources.....	27
Overview of SIAS.....	27
The learner SIAS process.....	29
Documenting the SIAS process and allocating roles and responsibilities	34
Unit 4: Role functions and responsibilities	37
Introduction	37
Outcomes.....	37
Resources.....	37
The SIAS role-players and their functions	37
The role of educators in SIAS	39
The role of the SBST in SIAS	43
The role of the DBST in SIAS	45
Unit 5: SIAS in the classroom: screening and identifying barriers	47
Introduction	47

Outcomes.....	47
Resources.....	47
Barriers to learning and development.....	47
Early and ongoing identification of barriers.....	52
Introducing tools for screening and identification of barriers.....	54
The Learner Profile as a screening tool.....	55
Admission as a screening tool.....	57
Classroom observation as a screening tool.....	57
Parent and learner interviews as a screening tool.....	60
Screening checklists.....	61
Unit 6: SIAS in the classroom: curriculum support.....	69
Introduction.....	69
Outcomes.....	69
Resources.....	69
Differentiating the curriculum.....	71
Differentiating assessment.....	89
Unit 7: Implementing SIAS at school level: SNA 1 and 2.....	103
Introduction.....	103
Outcomes.....	103
Resources.....	103
SNA1.....	103
SNA2 and the Individual Support Plan.....	105
References.....	109

Introduction

This Participant's Manual on the Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) has been developed to orientate educators in the implementation of the Policy in schools and districts.

Since 2006 selected schools and districts have been participating in subsequent orientation programmes on the Draft National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support. Observations and recommendations emerging from the implementation have been incorporated into the final Policy, which was promulgated on 19 December 2014 as a national policy to be implemented in all schools and districts as from 2015.

The Policy outlines through a set of forms, how the support needs of learners should be identified and how they should be supported in the education system. The procedures give guidance about the role of educators to ensure that barriers to teaching and learning are addressed and all learners are supported to participate and develop their full potential in their neighbourhood schools with their peers.

The following documents will be used in the orientation programme:

- The Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS) (2014)
- Education White Paper 6 (2001)
- Guidelines for Full-Service/Inclusive Schools (2010)

The intention of the SIAS Orientation Workshops will be to provide support to educators in respect of the implementation of the SIAS Policy in all schools and districts. It is an introduction to the SIAS principles and procedures and will assist educators to utilise these documents effectively in their daily practice. This is the first orientation programme and follow-up training, mentoring and support will be provided at all levels.

In anticipation, we thank you for your participation in this orientation programme and wish you well in your engagements with your colleagues and teachers.

Directorate: Inclusive Education
Department of Basic Education
2015

What is in this workshop: Introducing the Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS)

This workshop is an Introduction to the Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS).

It is divided into seven units. Each unit deals with a different topic found in the SIAS Policy. As much as possible, we work through the policy from start to finish, whilst giving an overview of the complete policy, but spending more time on the issues most relevant to you, the educator.

Your facilitator will take you through the units, one at a time. You will be asked to read the policy to find out what it says about the topic. You will also check your knowledge and practice applying policy through case studies and other activities.

As you proceed through the workshop, keep thinking about what everything means for you in your work with your learners, in your classroom and in your school. What are you learning that will help you to support your learners to be the best that they can be?

Once you have completed this introductory workshop, there will be other workshops that look at different elements in more detail.

Good luck and enjoy the workshop.

Unit 1: Introducing the Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (SIAS)

Introduction

In this unit, we introduce the SIAS policy. We look at the purpose and rationale (reason) of the SIAS policy, and the related legal and policy framework. This is discussed in the SIAS Policy chapters 1, 2 and 5.

We also look at the organising principles of support, principles of assessment, guiding principles for decision-making and competencies related to the SIAS process. This is discussed in SIAS Policy chapter 3.

This unit looks at the SIAS policy chapters 1, 2, 3 and 5.

Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain what the policy is
- Explain the purpose of the SIAS policy
- Discuss the legal mandate: the related legislation, policies and treaties that inform and provide the rationale for the SIAS policy
- Discuss the principles and guidelines underpinning the policy
- Understand the link between the SIAS policy and the NCS, Gr R – 12 Overview (specifically Curriculum Differentiation)

Resources

You need:

- SIAS Policy Chapters 1, 2, 3 + 5

What is the SIAS policy?

Screening, identification, assessment and support (SIAS) is a policy that provides standardised procedures for supporting learners to ensure that ALL children may access quality education and achieve to the best of their ability. This involves screening, identification of barriers, assessment of support needs and provision and monitoring of support.

The SIAS policy details the system to be used for identifying needs, and for planning, budgeting and implementing programmatic support at all levels within the system. It addresses the following:

- The legal mandate for the policy
- Principles underpinning the policy, assessment and decision making around support provision
- The SIAS process
- Procedures to be followed
- Forms to be used
- Roles and responsibilities of key role-players and coordinating structures (School-based Support Team [SBST] and District-based Support Team [DBST])
- Policy implementation plan 2015-2019

During the workshop, we will look at these areas. This is not an alternative to reading the policy yourself; we recommended that you read the entire SIAS Policy.

The purpose of the policy

No policy is developed in a vacuum. Policies respond to needs and they aim to provide mechanisms to respond to those needs in a consistent and standardised way. The following task looks at why we need a SIAS policy. It includes a story as an example of the many children in South Africa facing one or more barriers to learning preventing full and equal access to education.

TASK 1: The purpose of the SIAS policy

Read this story and then answer the questions that follow.

David is 10 years old. He attends a school 8 km from home. He lives in a two-room house that he shares with his mother, his 85-year-old sick grandfather and eight other children. His mother is blind and cannot find a job. Because no one in the house earns an income David is often hungry. He and the other older children in the household take turns to stay home from school and care for the grandfather. His schoolwork suffers because he is not able to attend school every day. He must also fetch water from a river that is 1km from home every morning before school and is often late for school. When he is at school he often finds it difficult to concentrate because he is usually hungry and he worries about his grandfather a lot. He is

also sad because his father left home to look for work and never returned.

When he gets home after a long day at school, he works in the neighbours' garden and then sells the vegetables to earn some money to buy food for the family.

The teacher does not know why David comes to school late and why he is absent so often. She shouts at him for not doing his homework and for his poor performance at school.

David gets nervous when the teacher shouts at him so he sits at the back of the class so that she won't notice him. But David is partially sighted and can't see the board from the back of the class. No one knows about David's eyesight as his eyes have never been tested.

His academic performance gets worse and worse.

1. What challenges does David encounter in accessing quality education that prevent him from achieving his potential?
2. Reflect on David's story. What critical issues does it raise about access to full and equal participation for all learners to quality education?

David's story raises critical issues in terms of offering systemic support for learners in South Africa. In providing a systemic response to identifying barriers and the provision of additional support, the *SIAS policy aims to ensure the effective inclusion and full participation of ALL learners within the education system.*

After stating this purpose, the policy turns to related legislation, policies and treaties.

Related legislation and policies

The legal mandate

The SIAS Policy is grounded in:

- International and regional charters and conventions to which South Africa is signatory
- South African national laws and policies

Chapter 1.2, chapter 2 and chapter 5 of the SIAS policy document make reference to several related treaties, legislation, programmes and policy frameworks. We will now look at these.

TASK 2: What policies, legislation, treaties and programmes are referred to and why are they relevant to the SIAS policy?

1. List all the legislation, policies and programmes mentioned in chapter 1.2, chapter 2 and chapter 5 the SIAS policy document.
2. Briefly say why and how each of these treaties, legislation and policy documents is relevant to the SIAS policy.
3. Can you think of any others that are relevant but not mentioned?

If you wish, you can relate your answers to David's story in Task 1.

Rationale for SIAS policy

Chapter 2 of the SIAS Policy focuses on two documents that underpin the rationale of the SIAS policy: Education White Paper 6 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

Education White Paper 6: Building an Inclusive Education Support System

Education White Paper 6 discusses how the system of education will be organised to address barriers to access, teaching, learning and development. In order to address these barriers, it advocates for a continuum of support to be infused throughout the education system – in the form of support programmes and support provisioning.

In support of the implementation of the main principles of the White Paper, the SIAS policy aims to put a system in place to identify barriers to learning and the support needs that arise from these, in order to develop the necessary support programmes.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

In keeping with the SIAS policy's goal of inclusive education, Article 24 of the UN policy states that no learner can be excluded on the basis of disability. The policy puts measures in place to ensure that *every* child will have access to an inclusive, quality education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live. It also acknowledges the need to provide individualised support measures in order to realise the goal of full inclusion.

After focusing on these two policies, the SIAS policy document goes on to talk about barriers to learning and development. This is discussed below.

Addressing barriers to learning and development

Chapter 2.5 of the SIAS Policy explains that barriers to learning and development are challenges in the learning process that are a result of a broad range of experiences in the classroom, school, home, community and / or as a result of health conditions or disability. Do the following task to check your understanding of these barriers.

TASK 3: Discuss barriers

Think about David's story and also about your own experiences in working with children. Spend a few minutes listing examples of barriers within each of the following four categories and say how the barriers could impact on effective participation:

systemic barriers

societal barriers

pedagogic barriers

intrinsic barriers

Compare your answers with the SIAS Policy chapter 2.5.

You will get a chance to interact more with this in later units.

After talking about barriers, the SIAS Policy document looks at what the policy does to help teachers and schools to determine the support needs of all learners.

Determining the support needs of all learners

Chapter 2.6 of the SIAS Policy describes the elements that the policy covers.

TASK 4: Determining the support needs of all learners

What do you want to find out from this workshop about the SIAS Policy? Together with a partner, make a list of five things.

Read 2.6 of the SIAS Policy and check whether you think the policy will answer your questions. Make sure that by the end of the workshop, you are clear about all of these elements.

This leads into Chapter 3 of the SIAS Policy document. Chapter 3 lays the foundation for the processes and forms discussed later in the policy, by establishing ground rules, guidelines and principles around assessment of support needs and support provision.

The principles and guidelines underpinning the SIAS policy

Having thought about the legal and policy mandate for the SIAS policy, it should be evident that SIAS is a rights-based policy that aims to provide a standardised systemic response to addressing all barriers to ensure that all children may access their right to quality education.

It offers principles and guidelines for support provision.

TASK 5: Exploring principles and guidelines

Use chapter 3 of the SIAS policy document to help you complete this task.

Read these statements and decide if they are true or false. Be ready to discuss your answers.

	Statement	True (T) or False (F)
1	Every child has the right to receive quality education within their local community.	
2	A child may be refused access to his / her local school.	
3	Support includes all activities in a school that increase its capacity to respond to diversity. For example, this could include reviewing school culture, admission policies and co-curricular programmes.	
4	There is no need to involve parents or learners in decisions around types of support offered and where to place learners.	
5	A learner may experience a range of barriers for example, poverty, curriculum delivery, disability or a violent home situation, requiring a holistic approach to assessing needs and designing support programmes.	
6	In the context of the SIAS process, assessment refers to the assessment of scholastic achievement.	
7	Parents of learners experiencing a physical or mental disability, should	

	Statement	True (T) or False (F)
	apply directly to a special school for admission of their child.	
8	Support is about the remediation of deficits within the learner.	
9	The nature and extent of support needed by a learner could include addressing educator or school needs.	
10	Placement of learners in a specialised setting to access support is a last resort and should not be seen as permanent.	

To make sure that you are clear about these crucial organising principles and guidelines, read SIAS Policy chapter 3 in your own time.



After a thorough examination of the principles and guidelines underpinning the SIAS policy, Chapter 3 of the policy goes on to discuss the competencies related to the SIAS process.

Competencies related to the SIAS process

Certain competencies of the SIAS process lie with different levels of authority within the system. The following task helps to identify the competencies for each level of authority in the SIAS process.

TASK 6: Match the competency with the level of authority

Use Chapter 3.11 to help you match the competency with the level of authority in the task below.

Draw lines to match the role-player with their required competency		
Who?		Competency
Educators		To respond to requests for a assistance from SBST
		To respond to educator's requests for assistance with Individual Support Plans (ISP)
SBST		To provide classroom-based interventions to address support needs of learners
		To provide direction with regard to concessions and accommodations to enhance a school-based support plan
		To gather information and identify learners at risk of learning breakdown
DBST		To ratify requests for learner outplacement into a specialised setting
		To request assistance from the DBST to enhance the ISP or support their recommendation for placement of a learner into a specialised setting

Unit 2: Level and nature of support

Introduction

We now take a closer look at the idea of support and what it means. This unit discusses the shift in how we understand support, the five support organisers and three levels of support. Whilst discussion around the support organisers and levels of support is more relevant to the SBST and DBST than educators, you do need some information to understand how decisions around support provisioning are taken.

This unit addresses the SIAS Policy chapters 3.8, 3.9, 3.10 and 4.

Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the shift in how we understand support
- Explain how the SIAS defines support
- Explain institutional arrangements for the delivery of support
- Explain what the five support organisers are
- Describe the three levels of support

Resources

You need:

- SIAS Policy: Definitions, Chapters 3.8, 3.9, 3.10 and 4

What is support?

At the heart of the SIAS process, is support. This support aims to ensure access and participation of all learners to reach their potential.

Whilst support addresses barriers at an individual learner level, it also includes all the activities in a school that increase its capacity to respond to diversity and ensure effective learning and teaching for all learners. This means identifying and addressing learner, educator and institutional needs on an ongoing basis.

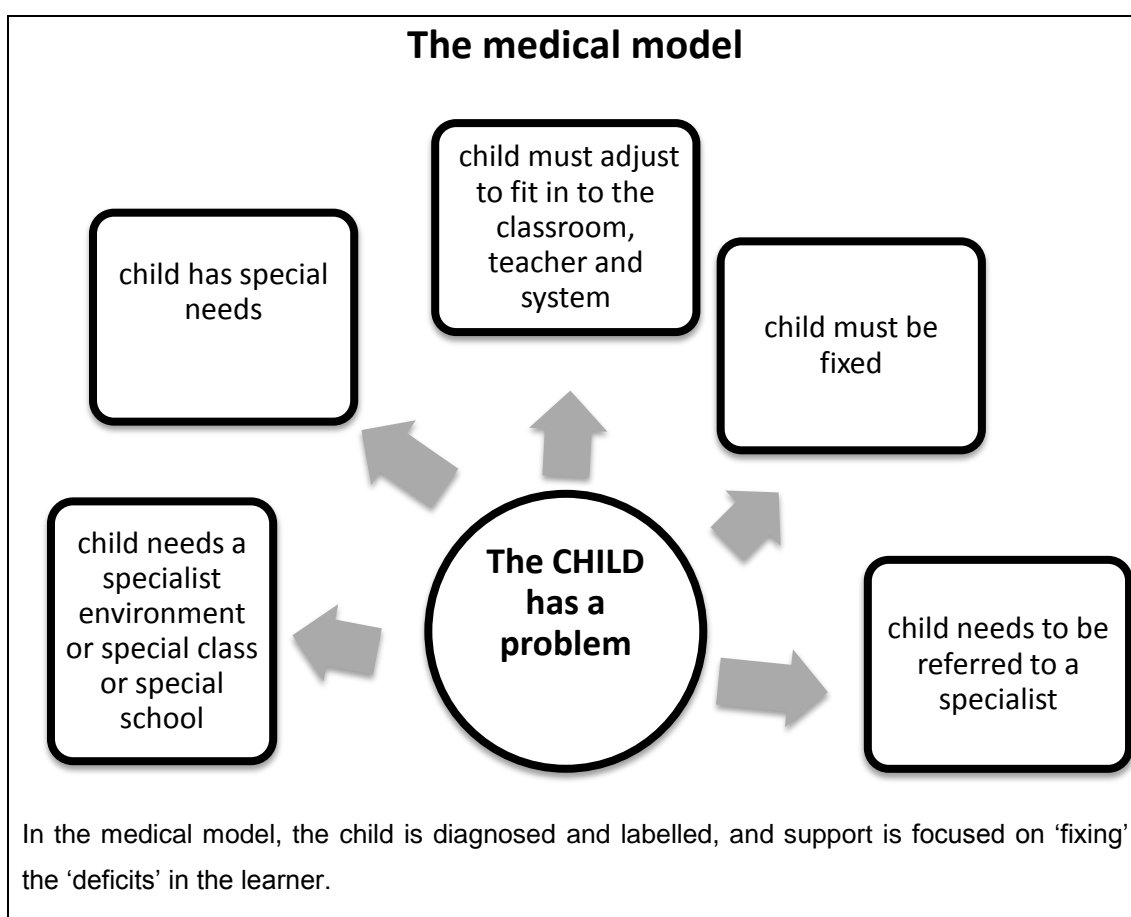
Although every learner needs support, some learners need additional support. Additional support refers to those programmes and/or resources that must be provided in addition to the standard educational provisioning in order to maximise the learner's participation, retention and achievement in the learning process.

Support could therefore mean a wide variety of things: for example, an educator planning lessons in a different way; increased action to tackle bullying; teacher training on curriculum and assessment differentiation; building wheelchair accessible toilets; or accessing specialist services.

Shifting focus from the individual learner deficit to the support programme

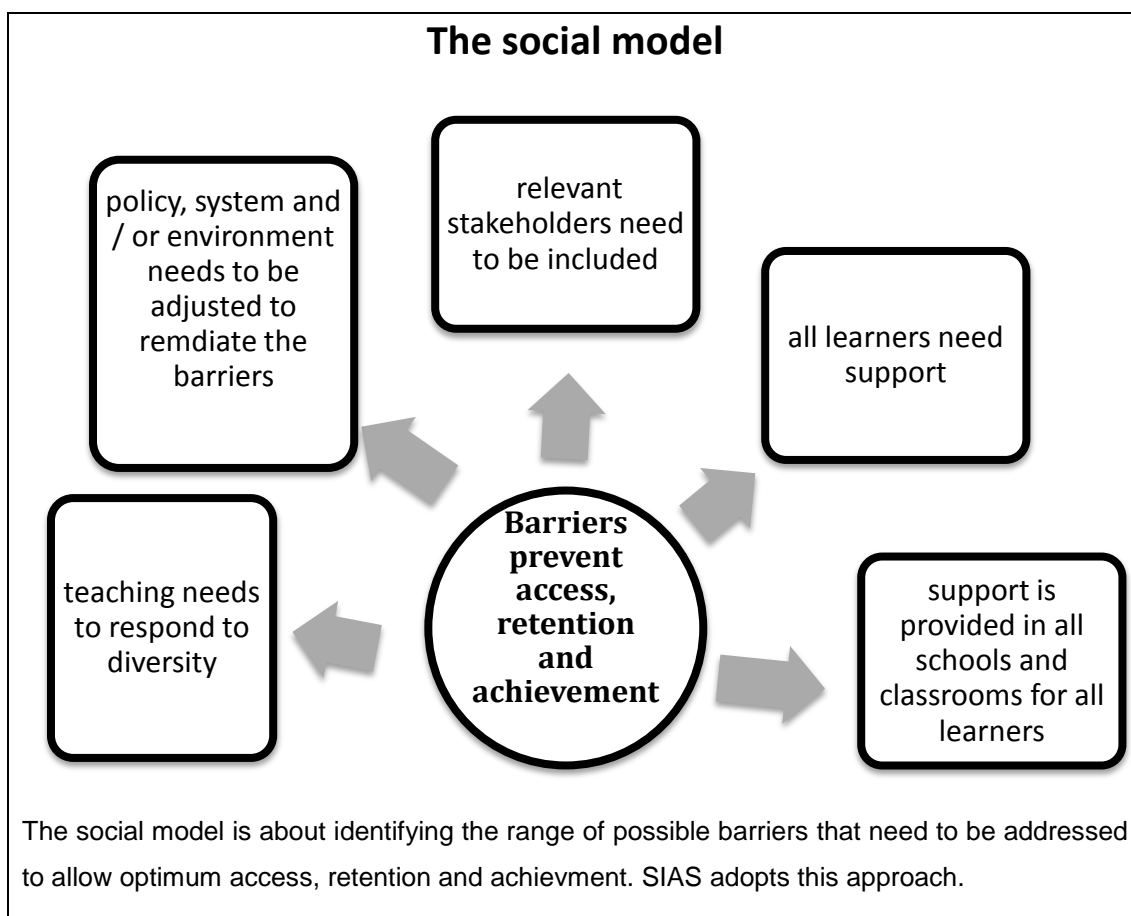
The policy aims to facilitate a fundamental shift in the understanding of support, a shift from individual disability as the driving organiser of support to that of the range, nature and level of support programmes, services, personnel and resources needed to increase access, participation and achievement.

Previously, support focused on the diagnosis and remediation of deficits in individual learners. It looked something like this:



The SIAS policy on the other hand, adopts an integrated and holistic approach that considers a whole range of possible barriers to learning and the remediation of the barriers (not the learner) in order to support the learner. The aim is to design support

programmes to facilitate access to learning. Chapter 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10 and 4:12 describes the shift and what it means. This approach looks something like this:



In the SIAS policy, the level of required support is rated and not the learner.

The SIAS policy describes the way this support is built into the system institutionally, in an integrated way, on a continuum of intensity, ranging from low to moderate to high. This is discussed below. Although as an educator, you won't be making decisions about these issues, it is important that you understand how the system works and how support is infused into the system.

Institutional arrangements for delivery of support

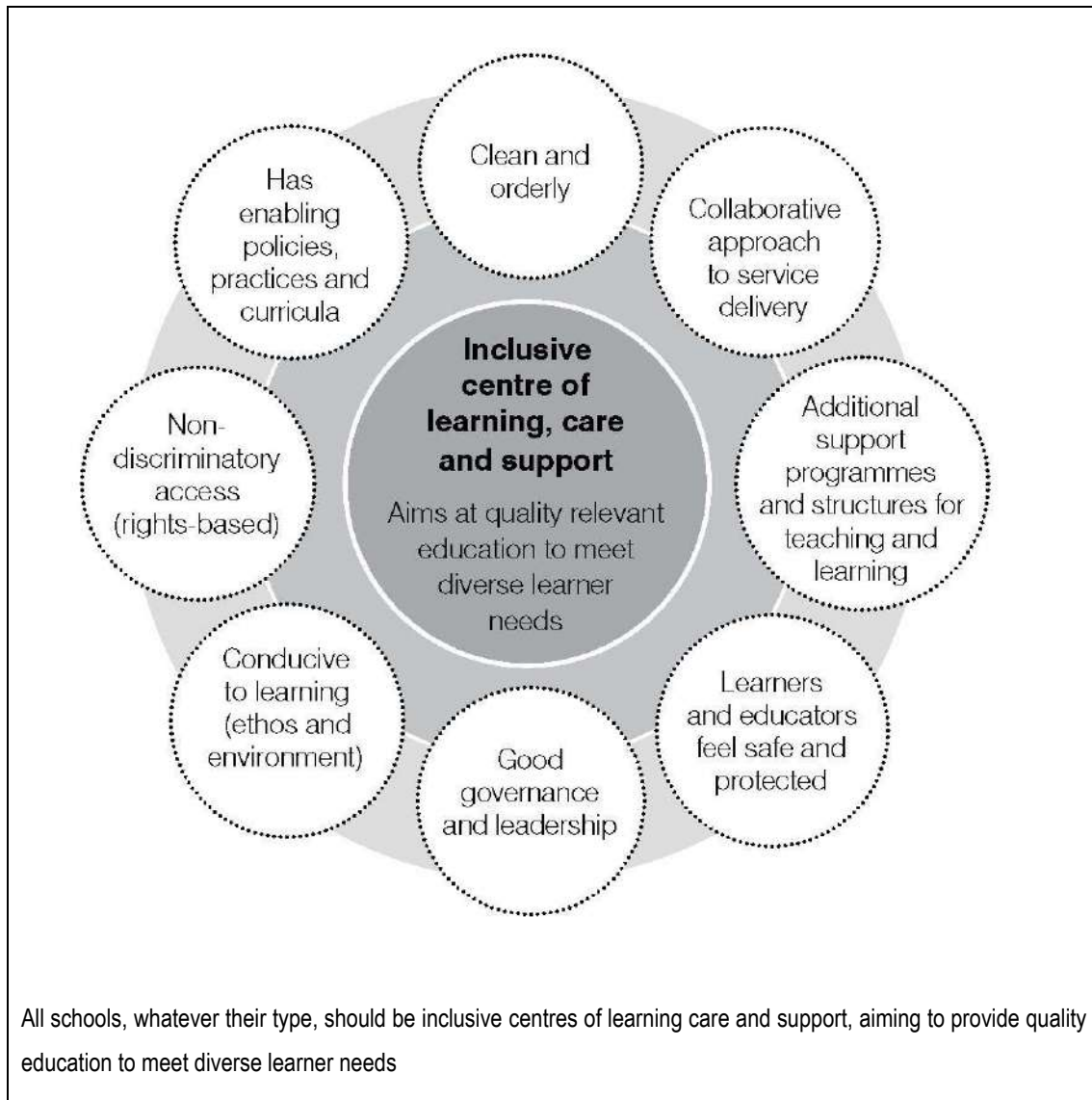
How is support built into the system institutionally?

Chapter 4.13 of the SIAS Policy document addresses this and it is based on Education White Paper 6, which describes three types of schools: ordinary, full service and special schools.

What is common to ordinary, full service and special schools?

The key to understanding the three types of schools is to know that *all* schools are inclusive centres of learning, care and support.

This means that every school must provide relevant quality education for a broad range of learning needs and should include the following minimum components:



What is different about the schools?

The *difference* between the schools is that some schools will receive more support (through Departmental provisioning), enabling them to offer more intensive and higher levels of support.

Ordinary schools

Ordinary schools will offer low to moderate levels of support. For example by:

- Facilitating access to grants
- Differentiating lessons to cater for different learning styles
- Accessing counselling services for learners
- Accessing workshops on skills for educators
- Accessing learning support services

Ordinary schools will not have sophisticated levels of resources or specialist staff, but they can access these resources from the full service and special schools, and the circuit and district offices.

Ordinary schools will admit all learners in their area – regardless of their difficulties – and take all possible measures to offer reasonable accommodation to learners with additional support needs and disabilities. While they might not immediately be able to offer the required levels of support to every learner they admit, the aim is to mobilise support through outreach services delivered by the District-based Support Team (DBST), Full-Service Schools and Special Schools within the district. Outplacement of learners to full service schools or special schools should be seen as a last resort.

Full service schools

Full service schools are ordinary schools that are equipped with additional support provisioning, so they can respond to a broader range of learning needs. These include:

- Specialised support staff: a learning support educator (LSE) and a counsellor
- Physical infrastructure: a support centre comprising a consulting room, health room, activity / training room with kitchenette, reception and storeroom, communal office space and disability-friendly toilets
- Specialised LTSMs and assistive devices such as textbooks in Braille, computer software, etc.

Through this additional provisioning, the full service school is able to:

- Offer moderate to high levels of support on site
- Act as a nodal point to deliver support to a group of schools

Special Schools and Special Schools as Resource Centres (SSRC)

Special schools and SSRC are ordinary schools that are equipped with even greater support provisioning to cater for the needs of learners requiring high intensity and very specialised support.

Through this additional provisioning, special schools and SSRC are able to:

- Provide site-based specialised programmes to learners requiring high to very high levels of support

In addition, SSRCs are also able to:

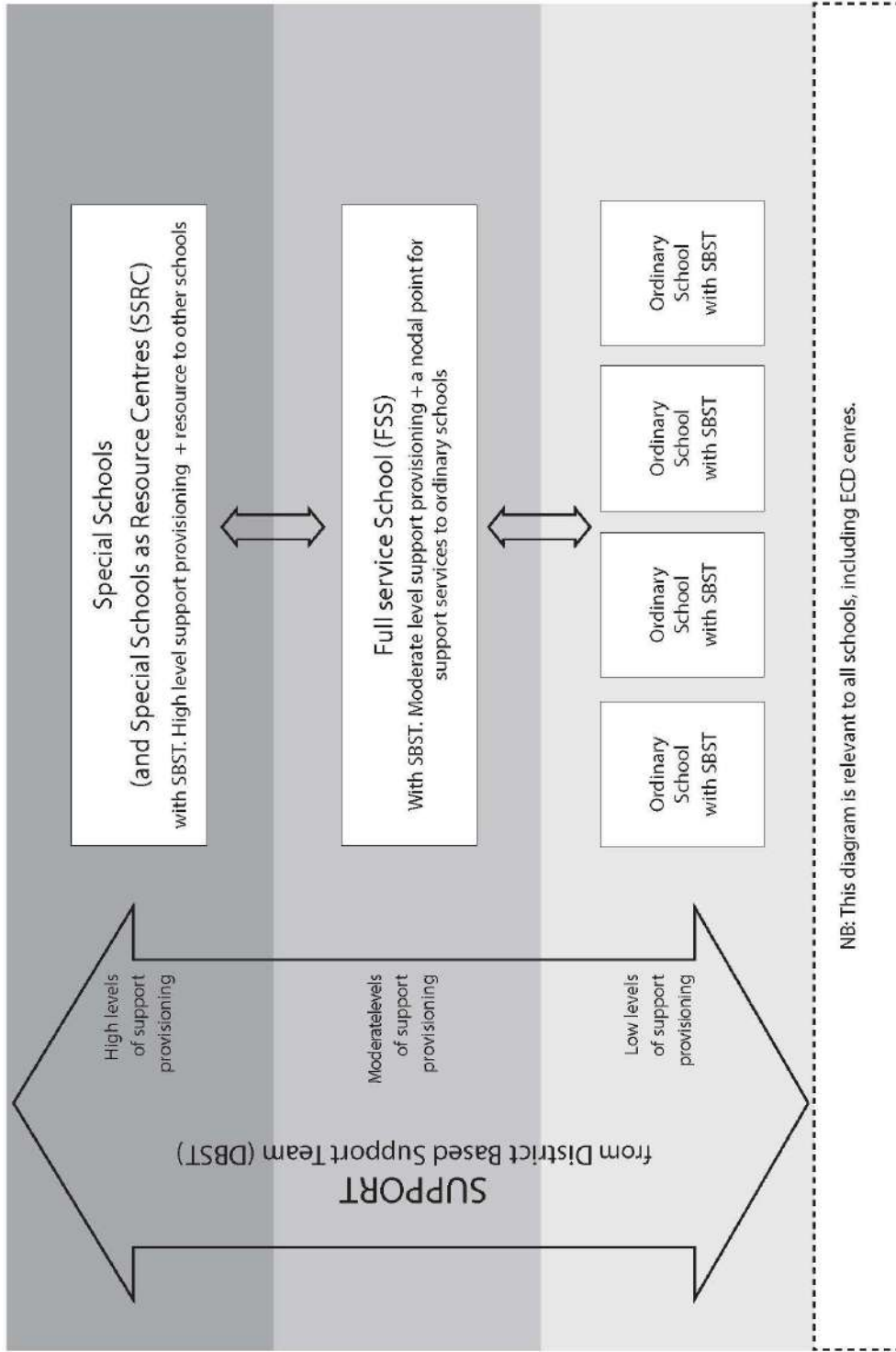
- Act as a nodal point to provide support (specialist skills and resources) to a cluster of ordinary schools and full service school

The additional provisioning is based on the programmes offered, rather than the category of disability. Although there is frequently a strong link between the category of disability (e.g. hearing, sight, motor) and the nature of a support programme offered, access to the support programme is not restricted to those that have a medically diagnosed disability – as long as the SIAS process has been followed.

Through its outreach programme to ordinary and full service schools, the SSRC will:

- Share specialist staff (e.g. therapist, psychologist, remedial educator, physiotherapist) by providing on-site support at these schools, or with staff exchange programmes
- Share specialised equipment (specialised chairs, computers, hearing devices etc.), and assist with their maintenance
- Share examples of good practice
- Provide professional training programmes that help institutions to meet specific additional support requirements of learners
- Assist these other types of schools with inter-sectoral collaboration and integrated service delivery, by participating at CBST/DBST level

Ordinary, Full Service and Special Schools



Now complete the following task to check your understanding of the similarities and differences between the three types of schools.

TASK 7: Compare the schools

Compare ordinary, full service, special schools and SSRC.

- What is common to the three different types of schools?
- What are the differences between the schools?

What type of school do you work in? Does your school meet the minimum standard expected of all schools? What support does your school offer learners? If you work in a full service or special school, what support does your school offer neighbouring schools and learners?

In your own time, read what the policy has to say about institutional arrangements for delivery of support. Read Chapters 3.8, 3.9, 3.10 and 4.13 of the SIAS Policy.

After discussing the institutional arrangements for support provisioning, chapter 4.14 of the SIAS Policy discusses programmes of support and levels of support. Whilst this is not directly relevant to you as an educator, it is useful to know a bit about it because the DBST will be working with these elements when deciding on support packages for learners and resource provisioning for schools.

Programmes of specialised support: support organisers

A number of support programmes are in place to address the scope of barriers that prevent access to learning. The SIAS policy (Chapters 3.8, 3.9 and 4.14) identifies five support organisers under which support needs are categorised. The table below lists the support organisers and gives some examples of each one.

Support organisers	Examples	
Additional /specialist services by specialised professional staff	Teaching assistant	Curriculum advisor
	Psychologist	Occupational Therapist
	Counsellor	Assistive devices technician
	Speech Therapist	Learning Support Educator
Specialised LTSM and assistive technology	DVD machine	Interactive whiteboard
	Computer	TV
	Corner chair	AAC devices
	Tape recorders	Large print books
	Wheelchair	Hearing aid
Curriculum differentiation, including adjustments and accommodations in assessment	Curriculum differentiation in the mainstream classroom by educators	A highly structured individually tailored programme implemented by specialist staff in a specialised environment
Training and mentoring of educators, managers and support staff	Educator training by district based staff: e.g. for dealing with concentration difficulties in the classroom	Training on use and management of assistive devices or therapy programmes
Environmental access (usually once-off)	Ramps	Toilets
	Corridors rails	Signage, including low vision markings
A comprehensive list is included in Annexure 1 and 2 of the Operational Manual to the National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support.		

TASK 8: Identify the support organiser

Use the table above to decide which support organiser each of these support needs fall into.

1. Adjustments to curriculum delivery need to be made.
2. Teachers need training in curriculum differentiation.
3. A speech therapist is needed.
4. Adjustments need to be made to assessment methods.

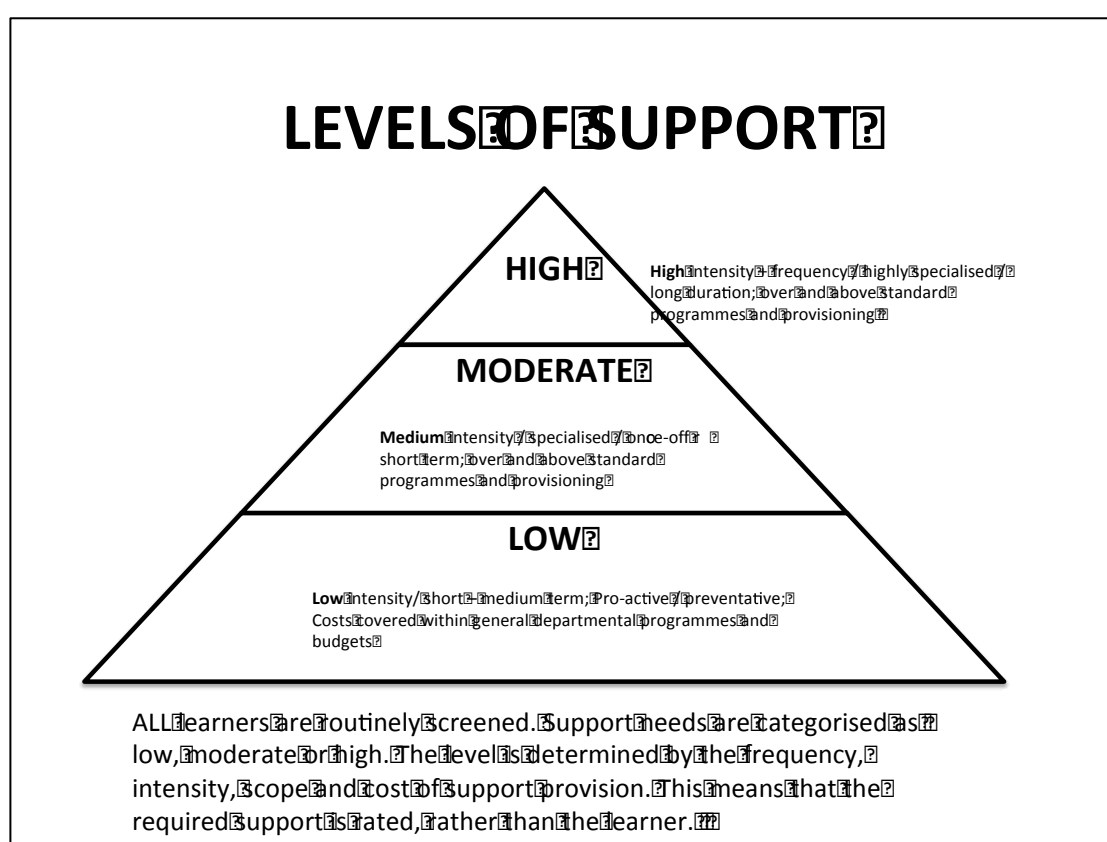
Where do you see yourself fitting in? Which of the support organisers are likely to fall within your area of responsibility?



Once the required support is categorised into one of five support organisers, it is then rated by the DBST according to a level of support: low, moderate or high. This is discussed below.

Levels of support

In principle, these levels are unrelated to the type of school. They are determined by the frequency / intensity, scope, availability and cost of the required support. Low-level support is generally pro-active or preventative and covered within general departmental programmes, policies and line budgets. Moderate level support is usually over and above standard programmes and provisioning and generally once-off, short term or of moderate intensity. High-level support is also over and above provisions covered by policies and provisioning for public schools and is generally highly specialised, expensive, high frequency and high intensity.



Determining a support package also means looking at the context

Determining a support package means looking at the type of support needed (support organiser) as well as the scope, cost and intensity of required support (level of support). It also means looking at the existing resources and support available to the learner and school.

Remember that the organising principle for support provisioning is that every learner has the right to receive quality basic education *within his local community*. This

means that, as far as is practically possible and within cost parameters, the support must be brought to the learner with little or no movement from his local community and home.

Some support may be available from within the local community and through effective networking there. Interventions that require material resources might come from a central point and be moved and shared as needed e.g. from a full service school. The scarcity of specialist professionals like therapists and social workers, especially in rural areas, must be taken into account in support planning and provisioning.

Sometimes it may be too costly or impractical to take the support to the learner and he/she may have to move - for example – a high demand for an expensive assistive resource like an incontinence unit. If the province can't meet the demand and cannot move the resource around then the learner might need to move. The decision for out-placement will be taken by the DBST and based on an assessment of the local school's ability to address the additional support needs and/or the resources that available to the school.

This means that, depending on the type of support needed and the educational institution's facilities and resources, a learner requiring high-level support may have his/her additional support needs met at an ordinary school. Learners with high support needs are not automatically moved from their local school.

Often, levels of support offered by a school may be higher or lower than the type of school (ordinary, full service or special school) suggests. Much depends on the way that the school, led by the SBST, responds to needs (including attitudes and ethos), the nature of the barriers and also, the resources available (and effectively mobilised) in the school and surrounding community.

Summary

This unit has covered a wide range of issues around support and deciding on support packages. Remember:

- Learners have the right to receive quality education to meet their support needs in their local school
- Support requirements are rated, not the learner
- Support programmes are categorised according to five support organisers (Specialist services; Specialised LTSM and assistive technology; Curriculum

differentiation; Training; Environmental access) As teachers you are most likely to be working in the support area of curriculum differentiation. We talk about this in a later unit.

- Three types of school (ordinary, full service and special schools) offer support on a continuum from low to moderate to high
- All schools, whatever the type, should be inclusive in culture, ethos and approach
- Support services may be available at site level or from a nodal site to try to ensure that support is brought to the learner
- Learners with high support needs may have these met at their local school. Learners are only moved as a last resort i.e. when the type, scope, frequency and cost of support required exceeds that school's ability to provide/reasonably access it

In your own time, read SIAS Policy, chapter 4.

Unit 3: The process of screening, identification, assessment and support (SIAS)

Introduction

In this unit, we look at an overview of SIAS: we go through the process step-by-step, and learn about the forms. We also identify key role-players. Their roles and responsibilities are covered in more detail in the next unit.

This unit is about SIAS Policy chapters 2, 6 and 7.

Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Give an overview of the SIAS process
- Describe the steps in Stages 1, 2 and 3 of the SIAS process
- Identify the forms needed for the different stages
- Identify key role-players in the process

Resources

You need:

- SIAS Policy Chapters 2, 6 + 7

Overview of SIAS

SIAS is a processing tool used to identify and support an “at risk” learner (i.e. a learner who is vulnerable to learning and developmental breakdown). It is described in Chapter 6.24 of the SIAS policy.

At school level

	What happens?	Main role-players
S	Screen all learners for vulnerability to learning and developmental breakdown.	Parents, educators, SBST, specialists within the DBST, other service providers, government departments (e.g. Departments of Health and Social Development)
I	Identify the barriers to learning and development.	
A	Assess their support needs (What support is needed now? Who can give the support? How often does the learner need it? etc.).	
S	Facilitate the development of the necessary support to meet these needs – action plan. Bring the support to the learner. Review the support and develop individual support plan (ISP) if necessary.	

Usually, you and your school's SBST are able to offer effective support as described above.

But sometimes, the needs of the learner are greater than what the school can access and offer. At that point, you and your SBST might need to apply for additional support provisioning from the DBST. This is the next stage of the SIAS process.

At district level

This stage deals with identifying, planning and budgeting at district level and the delivery of the identified additional support provisioning needs at an individual or school level. The process is as follows:

	What happens?	Main role-players?
S	School (SBST) screens for additional support needs not being met by current plan of action.	SBST, DBST, parents / caregivers, learners, specialists, government departments
I	School (SBST) identifies its additional support needs in order to be able to support a learner/group of learners, and applies for this additional support.	
A	DBST assesses the requests for additional support. (What support is required? What has the school done so far? What resources are available in the ward/circuit/district? Where and how can the required support be given? What is in the best interests of the learner?)	
S	DBST plans, budgets and facilitates the development / provisioning of the identified support needs.	

The learner SIAS process

Look at the flow chart showing the SIAS Process for Individual Learners (Policy on SIAS Chapter 7.38).

1. **Most learners will follow the route, A, B, F, H throughout their school lives.** Screening for support in this way needs to be ongoing. Even if a learner has had some successful support, further and additional support needs can develop.
2. **Support needs will differ.** Some learners will need low levels of support that will be given at their ordinary schools. There will also be those learners who require moderate levels of support from the learner support educator (LSE) or Counsellor, or those who will require access to high levels of additional support from the CBST/DBST. Approaching the DBST becomes relevant only for very sophisticated or high levels of support provisioning or for outplacement.
3. As soon as any information is written in the Learner Profile in a part with an asterisk (e.g. disability/grant), the learner is considered vulnerable. The SBST must be notified and this learner would automatically go to Block C.
4. **Accessing additional support is a learner's right but is not automatic.** The support must be applied for through the SBST and the DBST. Only the DBST may take the decision to move a learner from one school to another or to grant access to moderate and high levels of support provision.
5. Every learner must be admitted at his local school regardless of the apparent extent of his additional support needs, and the apparent inability of the school to provide the additional support needed. The line on the right hand side of the SIAS flow chart goes from C straight to R at the bottom of the page: this is for an "at risk" learner identified at admission in an ordinary school, who needs DBST support. These learners take the path directly to the DBST.
6. The process is not intended to add stumbling blocks that hinder a learner from accessing additional support quickly. Instead, the process aims to ensure that:
 - a. Every learner accesses the education system and no one is denied access because of barriers.

- b. Support, and not out-placement, is the guiding principle to provide support for learners with barriers to learning and development.
 - c. Schools are enabled to access additional support provisioning (via the SIAS process).
 - d. Schools provide additional support for learners who require such support.
 - e. Parents/caregivers and learners are involved in the decisions taken to access additional provisioning.
7. **Ideally, new admissions need to happen in advance of the school year**, (usually by August of the preceding year), particularly in the case of a learner with high support needs. If the Learner Profile, and SNA1+ 2 are completed timeously, the SBST has time to plan for accessing the additional support.
8. Support provision at school level does not mean that support from the DBST is not available to educators and learners. The educator, in consultation with the SBST, can request assistance from officials or specialists at the CBST/DBST level, for example, short term input from psychologists at the district office, assessment by speech therapists or other specialists at the circuit/district office. When parents cannot afford private assessments, SSRC therapists do assessments for other schools. University students are also a good source of assessments, e.g. speech therapy students.

Now that you've looked at the SIAS process, the next task provides practice in following the process using a variety of case studies.

TASK 9: Following the SIAS process

1. Look at the four case studies. Read each case study and discuss the questions as they appear. You need the flow chart showing the SIAS Process for Individual Learners (SIAS Policy page 38) to help you answer them.
2. Complete each case study before beginning the next one.
3. Bear in mind that in a real-life situation, the barriers to learning and support interventions that appear in each case study would be documented.

Case studies

Read the case and trace the route described below. Answer the questions and follow the route on the **SIAS Process for Individual learners (SIAS Policy page 38)**

1.	Linda
1.1	[Start at Block A] Linda changed schools in the middle of the year. She was from a middle income, stable family with two working parents. She appeared to be a secure child with good self-esteem and social skills. Reports indicated average academic performance. → Is Linda at risk or not? → Do you go to Block B or C?
1.2	[Move from Block B to Block F] During the first term at her new school, her teacher discovered that Linda was struggling a bit with maths, and working at a slightly lower level than her peers. → Are there any concerns? Does Linda have possible additional support needs? → Do you go to Block H or I?
1.3	[Move to Block I] After discussion with Linda and parents, the teacher put in place a more intense programme with extra homework to allow Linda to catch up the work she had missed due to changing schools in the middle of the year. Within two months she had caught up with her peers and flourished in this subject. → Was the support successful or not? → Do you go to Block J or K? → Where do you go after that?

2.	Dennis
2.1	<p>[Start at Block A]</p> <p>When Dennis applied for Grade I, his Road to Health booklet showed he was not up to date with his measles and polio immunisation.</p> <p>→ Is Dennis at risk or not?</p> <p>→ Do you go to Block B or C?</p>
2.2	<p>The teacher and SBST gave him a letter referring him to the clinic. Staff at the clinic gave him the missing immunisation. A copy of his updated Road to Health booklet was filed in his Learner Profile.</p> <p>→ Was the support successful or not?</p> <p>→ Do you go to Block D or E?</p> <p>→ Where do you go next?</p>
3.	Portia
3.1	<p>[Start at Block F]</p> <p>Portia had been at her school for some time and had never needed any additional support.</p> <p>During routine screening and observation, the teacher noticed that Portia often copied words incorrectly from the board, but that her close up reading was fine. She moved Portia's desk closer to the board after discussion with her, and recommended that Portia visit the clinic.</p> <p>→ Are there any concerns?</p> <p>→ Does Portia have possible additional support needs?</p> <p>→ Do you go to Block H or I?</p>
3.2	<p>During the Department of Health's planned ISHP eye screening visit shortly thereafter, Portia was diagnosed as needing glasses. With regular check-ups for changes in her eyesight, Portia no longer had difficulties with her long distance vision.</p> <p>→ Was the support successful or not?</p> <p>→ Do you go to Block J or K?</p> <p>→ Where to next?</p>
4.	Andy
4.1	<p>[Start at Block A]</p> <p>When Andy was admitted to his new school, his previous reports indicated that he was very aggressive, was unable to control his temper and often endangered himself and others with his impulsive and anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>→ Is concern raised or not?</p> <p>→ Do you go to Block B or C?</p>

4.2	<p>The SBST examined Andy's records and recommended that the support given at his previous school be continued, because those strategies seemed to have been successful. They controlled Andy's anti-social behaviour and ensured that he was able to engage productively and effectively with the curriculum and all school activities. The SBST and teacher met his parents and recommended that the same support be given, and regularly monitored and reviewed the situation.</p> <p>→ Do you go to Block D or E?</p>
4.3	<p>Within two weeks however, Andy had pushed another learner down a flight of steps, and threatened to stab himself with his scissors if he was made to do maths. The teacher was very concerned about Andy's behaviour and didn't know how to deal with him. She was worried about what might happen if she carried on with her existing strategy. She felt ill equipped to handle Andy and urgently requested the help of the SBST.</p> <p>→ What now? Block G or K?</p>
4.4	<p>The SBST recommended that the LSE and counsellor get involved immediately to help the teacher and to further assess Andy to determine the cause of his aggression, and ways to handle it.</p> <p>In spite of teacher training on strategies to deal with Andy and fortnightly visits from the counsellor, Andy's behaviour did not improve and the situation worsened. Andy hit a child with a cricket bat and then climbed onto the roof of the school, threatening to jump off if he got into trouble for hitting the other child.</p> <p>→ Support successful or not? Block M or N?</p> <p>→ Where to next?</p>

Now check that you understand the SIAS process by completing the following task.

TASK 10: Put the steps of the SIAS process in the correct order

This table summarises the SIAS process followed for a learner. But the steps are in the wrong order. Put the number of each step in the column on the right to indicate the correct order. The first one has been done for you.

1	Reading programme is monitored and reviewed.	
2	Reading programme unsuccessful. Educator asks for assistance from SBST.	
3	Educator teaches, observes, screens, assesses, reads learner profile, conducts learner and parent interviews, etc.	
4	SBST and educator review all available data including interventions already tried. They draw up an ISP.	
5	Based on identified barrier, assessment of support needs and parent and learner consultations, educator puts extra reading programme in place	
6	Barrier identified. Parent (and learner) consultations. Support needs assessed	
7	DBST reviews the SBST's ISP and support action taken to date and identifies support package for educator and SBST	
8	Learner is admitted to school.	I
9	ISP is implemented, monitored and reviewed by educator and SBST. ISP support programme unsuccessful.	
10	SBST requests assistance and support from DBST.	

Documenting the SIAS process and allocating roles and responsibilities

The above processes and the steps need to be written down (documented), so that there is a documented history of support. Forms are provided for this. See SIAS Policy 2014: Forms for a full list of the forms that you may need to use. We will look at these in more detail in detail in later units.

Responsibilities are also allocated. For a quick guide about who should fill in the forms and when, look at the Diagram of responsibilities in Chapter 6.24 of the SIAS Policy.

The following gives you practice in identifying the role-players and the forms they need to use. Use SIAS policy chapter 6.24 to help you.

TASK 11: Role-players and documents in the SIAS process: Misha's story

Read Misha's case study below.

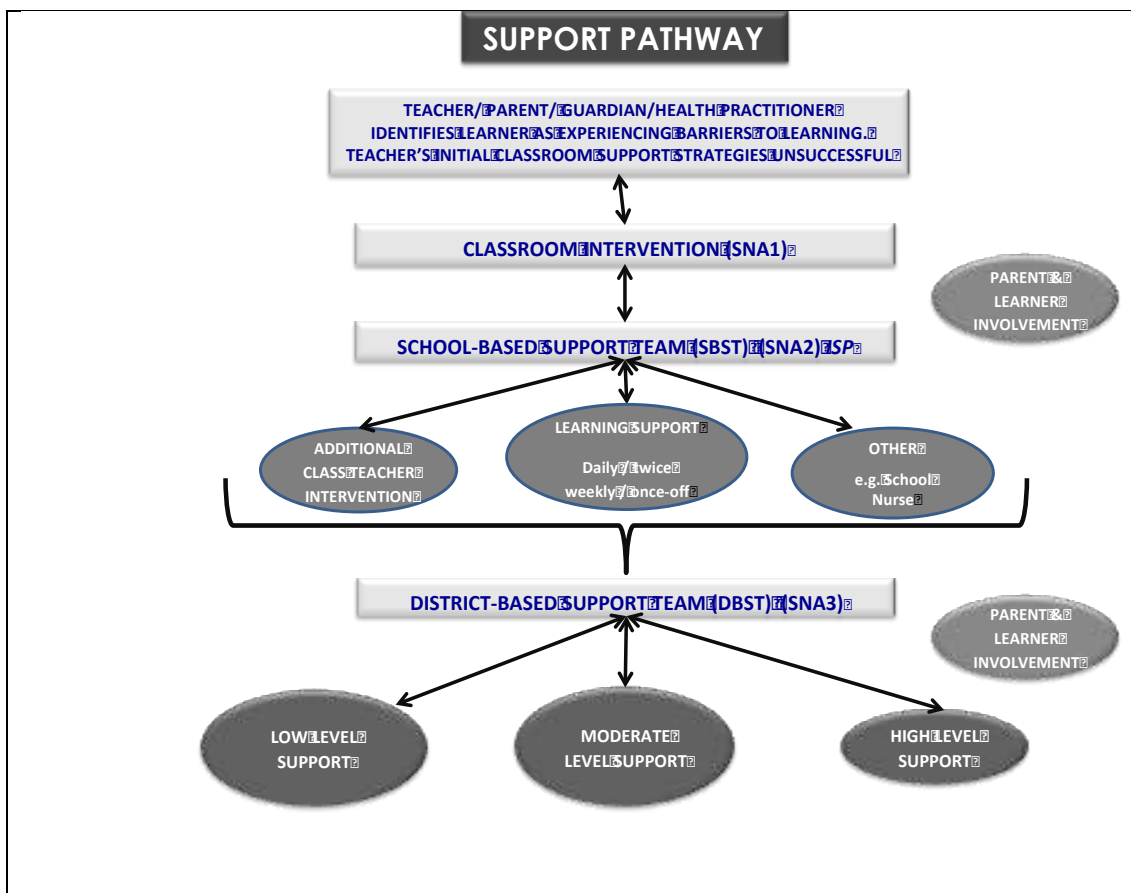
In the centre column, list the role-players as they are mentioned. In the right hand column, list the documents that were used. Under each document, list the role-player responsible for completing it.

Refer to Chapter 6.24 of the SIAS policy if necessary.

Misha's story	Role-players	Documents + responsible role-player
<p>When Misha started school in Grade 1, her parents completed an admission form. The school admitted her and her teacher screened her and recorded the findings in Misha's Learner Profile. This was then captured in the Learner Unit Record Tracking System. There was no obvious evidence of any barriers to learning. The school kept copies of relevant documents like her Road to Health Booklet in her Learner Profile</p>		
<p>During her foundation phase schooling, her teachers taught, observed, assessed and got to know her, and met and interacted with her parents. They found Misha to be a happy child and her year-end reports showed that although she was slow to read, she had made good progress, especially in maths.</p>		
<p>When she got to Grade 3, it became clear that she had some kind of language-based learning difficulty. The teacher discussed it with Misha's parents, who decided to consult a doctor to find out if there was a medical reason for Misha's difficulties. After examining her, the doctor gave her a clean bill of health and completed Form DBE126. The teacher then completed support form SNA1 and put an extra reading programme in place.</p>		
<p>After monitoring the reading programme for three months, the teacher found that Misha had made very little progress and, in consultation with Misha's parents, she formally requested additional support from the SBST. Using the SNA2 form, the teacher and SBST drew up an ISP that involved the assistance of the LSE.</p>		
<p>The LSE worked with the teacher and the SBST to develop and implement the ISP. Misha's teacher continued to offer support in accordance with the plan but Misha's performance remained poor compared to the potential that she seemed to have. At an SBST review meeting to monitor the ISP, it was decided that Misha might require the additional assistance of a speech and language therapist on a daily basis over an extended period of time.</p>		

Misha's story	Role-players	Documents + responsible role-player
<p>The SBST completed DBE 120 to request support from the district. The DBST reviewed Misha's case and, using SNA3, drew up a plan of action for Misha (DBE121) that involved providing additional support in the form of intensive speech and language therapy for a period of two months, after which time her progress would be reviewed.</p>		

Here is a summary of the SIAS support process.



In the next unit, we explore role-players in more detail.

Unit 4: Role functions and responsibilities

Introduction

By now, you should know that there are many role-players in the SIAS process and that providing effective support needs collaboration between all role-players.

This unit lists the role-players, and then explores their roles, functions and responsibilities and how they need to work together to achieve success.

The unit addresses SIAS Policy chapter 3.11, 5.16-5.22 and 7.

Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Describe the roles, functions and responsibilities of role-players in the SIAS process, in particular of educators, the SBST and DBST
- Explain the importance of a multi-sectoral approach, and identify partners
- Identify your role

Resources

You need:

- SIAS Policy: Chapter 3.11, 5.16-5.22 and 7

The SIAS role-players and their functions

The policy lists many role-players who are needed to make the SIAS process work properly. In the next task, you identify all the role-players and their functions.

TASK 12: Who are the role-players and what are their functions?

1. List all the role-players (including support teams) who have been identified during the workshop so far.
 - For each role-player, list at least as many functions as you can think of.
 - Use SIAS Policy chapters 3.11, 5.16-5.22 and 7 to add any role-players you missed out.
2. Match the roles with the role-players.
 - Read the list of role-players in the first table below.
 - Then read the list of functions in the SIAS process listed in the table below that.
 - Fill in one or more role-players for each function. The first one is done for you.
 - If you get stuck, use SIAS Policy Chapter 3.11, 5.16-5.22 and 7 to help you.

Role-players			
A	Educator and practitioner	B	Parent / caregiver
C	SBST	D	CBST/DBST
E	Specialists based at circuit or district e.g. LSE, counsellor, speech/language therapist, etc.	F	Government departments e.g. Health, Transport, Social Development
G	Non-government/non-profit organisation (NGO/NPO), disabled people organisation (DPO) and higher education institution (HEI)	H	ECD service provider
I	Learner	J	Full service school / special school / SSRC
K	SGB		

	Functions in the SIAS process (in no particular order)	Role-players
1	Identifies barriers to learning and development	A, B, C, F (Health), H for ECD
2	Draws up, implements monitors and reviews individual support plan for a learner	
3	Implements and applies appropriate classroom strategies, e.g. learning style adaptations, group work organisation, adapting teaching approaches, curriculum differentiation, implementation of ISP	
4	Involved in assessing own progression	
5	Gets to know learners and their parents or caregivers	
6	Is in a position to identify systemic barriers to learning at a young age and can provide useful information to receiving school	
7	Is involved at all times in the identification and assessment processes of a child	
8	Facilitates or provides training/support for educators to address additional learner support needs	
9	Facilitates / provides support / training to SBST	
10	Monitors the implementation of SIAS processes at school	

	Functions in the SIAS process (in no particular order)	Role-players
11	Elicits support from the SBST after having tried several strategies, serves as a source of information to the SBST	
12	Updates learner profile annually	
13	Ensures culture, ethos and policies of school are inclusive	
14	Provides services in rural and disadvantaged areas as part of its community outreach programme	
15	Represents the rights of parents and families of children with disabilities	
16	Allocates social grants	
17	Assumes the role of case manager to drive the support processes	
18	Ratifies a decision for a learner to move to a new school	
19	Provides direct support to learners in terms of specialised interventions	
20	Monitors the services of the extended network of specialised support staff based at the circuit or district offices, e.g. psychologist	
21	School may require its help to conduct more formal assessment of support needs	
22	Allocates and budgets support provisioning, e.g. new assistive devices and additional specialist staff	
23	Analyses applications made by SBST for extra support provisioning to determine whether the SBST has exhausted all support measures at school level	
24	Applies for additional support provisioning based on the support needs of learners, educators and the school	
25	Monitors implementation of SIAS processes at school to ensure that learners with additional support needs are accommodated	

The role of educators in SIAS

Educators have a very important role to play in the implementation of SIAS. Learners are at school all day, so you spend more time with them every day than even some of their caregivers. You, together with their caregivers, are best placed to understand individual learners and their needs. You are critical to building support into the education system. In order to do this well, educators need to:

- Be committed to the principle of inclusion and take care not to label learners who are identified for additional support, thereby promoting exclusionary practices
- Know your learners and understand their diverse needs
- Understand the learning context (the school, classroom and home) and the full range of potential barriers (intrinsic, societal, systemic or pedagogic)
- Meet and interview parents/caregivers and develop a working relationship with them
- Know the curriculum and be able to make it accessible to all learners by accommodating the diversity of learning needs
- Open a Learner Profile for new admissions in Grade R, and update annually
- Review the Learner Profile every year in order to assess barriers to learning and develop a full understanding of each learner's support needs
- Conduct ongoing screening and identify barriers to learning using a variety of screening tools, i.e. observation, interviews and consultation, reflection, formative actions, previous records
- Plan support for individual learners who experience barriers to learning. Use the Guidelines for Responding to Diversity in the Classroom.
- Support learners experiencing barriers by adapting curriculum content, adjusting classroom methodologies and the classroom environment, and applying the necessary accommodations in assessment and examinations
- Know what support and resources, including specialised LTSMs, are available and how to access them
- Consult with the SBST once all your support strategies have been exhausted

The SIAS process is a tool for early intervention. It is designed to help you assess needs as early as possible, and then work with learners, families, other practitioners and service providers, to meet those needs.

Even though you may get support from others, you are the case manager who will drive the support process. Information that you get from external assessments will help you to understand what interventions are needed, but they should not be central in decision-making around support. The knowledge and wishes of the parents/caregivers and learners are also important.

Your main role in the SIAS process is:

- Ongoing screening and identification of barriers to learning: we talk about this in the next unit.
- Drawing up, implementing, monitoring and reviewing action plans to support individual learners: we also talk about this in later units
- Implementing and applying appropriate classroom strategies to address barriers to learning: Curriculum differentiation, including adjustments and accommodations in assessment, is one of the five support organisers. We talk about this in a later unit.

Now read and work on the following case study. An educator is talking about her job as a foundation phase teacher.

TASK 13: Case study: Mrs Razil

1. Read the following story running down the left hand column. As each part of the story unfolds, comment on what happened in the column on the centre, and name the role-players.
2. List any documents that could be used in the SIAS process in the column on the right. Remember to think about where the form goes once it has been completed. For example, once the SBST has submitted its monthly register of learners with additional support needs, the CBST/DBST will also become involved.

The first two have been done as an example.

In the story below, Mrs Razil talks about her job as a foundation phase teacher:	Comment on what happened and name the role-players	List any documents that could be used
You may talk to me of this new thing called inclusive education, but it is not new for me. In my 20 years of teaching, there have always been some learners who struggle a bit here or there and need some extra help in one way or another.	Educator identifies learners with barriers to learning and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessments • Mark books • Reports • Observation • Standard classroom based procedures • Learner Profile
This is a rough area and there are high levels of unemployment, high incidents of alcohol abuse and high incidents of domestic violence and we know that it affects our learners.	Educator takes account of the contextual situation which create barriers and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation Book • Learner Profile

<p>I must watch carefully every day and see which one did not get dinner the previous night because the parents were too drunk or which learner has been crying because the father and mother were fighting or which one has bruises and marks that he / she is trying to hide. It gets so that you pick up patterns and you know which days are regularly worse than others.</p> <p>These things make it even harder for the learners who are struggling with their work because they also worry about things at home so they don't concentrate very well. I need to take account of these things in my teaching. I always plan something special for Mondays because some of these little ones have an especially difficult time over the weekends and are totally neglected.</p>	<p>responds to it in her classroom activities</p>	
<p>In the story below, Mrs Razil talks about her job as a foundation phase teacher:</p>	<p>Comment on what happened and name the role-players</p>	<p>List any documents that could be used</p>
<p>These are common problems in our school and we work together in the school and with people outside to try to deal with them as best we can. Even if we can't change the home situation, we can try to help with the consequences of it. For example, the church grannies make soup every day from the grant we get for food.</p> <p>We had a problem with safety, for example, with drunken aggressive parents coming into the school and threatening learners and educators. After several incidents, we decided to lock the school all the time.</p> <p>We regularly send children to the clinic because we often notice health difficulties – things that the parents don't pick up or care about. We are trying to get the Department of Health to come to the school on a regular basis instead because sending the children to the clinic means that we send letters to the parents asking them to take the children and they are not responsible or reliable and we never get feedback or anything.</p>		
<p>The children tell us all about the gang fights that happen on the weekends and it is their fathers and brothers who are involved! Many times, the children are traumatised and we don't know how to counsel them.</p> <p>With things like this, although we need counselling skills, we also need the help of a specialist professional counsellor regularly (maybe three mornings a week) and on an ongoing basis because</p>		

<p>there is so much complex counselling work – the emotional difficulties are widespread amongst our learners. It impacts on them in different ways but there is also increasing antisocial behaviour from some of these learners. It is very disturbing to see lots of little gangsters in the making! The principal reported in a staff meeting that he'd applied to the department for this specialist support.</p>		
<p>The one time, I tried lots of different strategies with a learner and nothing seemed to help with his difficulties. I had to ask for help and wanted the learner to see the speech and language therapist and I was told that I had to get the parent's consent. That was difficult and the parents first said that there was nothing 'wrong' with their child and that the problem was with the bad teacher! It's a long story, but we worked together and I documented the history of the learner and what I'd done and then together with school management and the speech therapist, we did some more assessments and then drew up a formal support plan. We implemented it and reviewed it regularly and although it took a lot of ongoing work, the support was successful.</p>		

Even though you are the case manager and the critical link between the learner and the support that is needed, you will not be working alone. You have support teams to help you. They are the SBST and DBST.

Chapters 3.11, 5.16-5.22, and chapter 7 in particular, talk about the SBST and DBST roles in the SIAS process. We now look at each of these briefly.

The role of the SBST in SIAS

Every school (ordinary, full service and special school) should have an SBST. The SBST is a management structure based on the SMT. It is responsible for implementing the SIAS policy and planning support for the learner, the educator and the institution.

TASK 14: Organising the SBST

1. Now that you know a bit about your role in the SIAS process, what kind of support do you think you will need from the SBST? Make a list of their roles.

Read SIAS Policy chapter 7.26 and 7.28 to check your answers

2. Make recommendations about the following:
 - Composition of the SBST

- Who should be the members of this team? (consider core and non-core members)
- Where do you see your role?
- Who should chair the SBST?
- What is its relationship with the SMT?
- How often should it meet?
- What should be standing items on its agenda?
- What records should be kept?

Compare your answers to SIAS policy, Chapter 3.11 and 7.27.

The following task provides an opportunity for you to engage with some of the issues on the agenda of a SBST meeting and come up with strategies for dealing with them.

TASK 15: Working on an SBST

1. Read below about the issues on the agenda of the SBST meeting.
2. For each issue:
 - Identify the needs you must deal with (see examples below).
 - What are your strategies? (Make sure you include relevant role-players in your suggested strategy – for example: the school principal, the RCL members, the Department of Social Development, parents, someone from Governance and Management, the local full service school).
 - Do you need to co-ordinate with anyone else in order to respond effectively? If yes, who and how?

Issues on SBST meeting agenda

Bullying at the school

Teaching staff have identified an ongoing, serious bullying problem. Many learners come from families struggling to survive, and some homes lack an adult caregiver. The stress and the lack of safety and control at home are affecting school life.

Other factors are contributing to the bullying – like the increased admission of Sotho-speaking learners who get victimised in the playground, or mocked in class when they experience language problems.

Most educators aren't sure how to handle the bullying, or how to support several frequent victims who are very distressed. Educators feel that the only answer is to identify the culprits, and then refer them to the social worker for placement at Boys and Girls Town.

The school food gardens

At least two volunteers are needed to build some school garden beds where learners with disabilities can work. The beds have to be raised so that the learners can comfortably dig with trowels, pull out weeds, and so on, while sitting in wheelchairs. Also, seeds, tools and fertiliser are needed.

Classroom teaching and learning

Educators are trying very hard with more inclusive classroom teaching – in line with the school vision. The class assistant appointed by the SGB has been a great help. But educators feel that one person is really like a drop in the ocean, considering what they are trying to achieve in their school.

There are 20 learners who have been identified as needing one or more of the following:

- specialised equipment
- additional lessons in reading and writing
- counselling
- adapted curriculum

The relevant educators feel unable to respond to these learners' needs from their current level of expertise and resources.

Placement of learners

Two newly admitted learners were immediately identified as having very high support needs. A girl with quadriplegia is also in very poor general health, and the other learner has a history of extremely violent and aggressive behaviour.

Worried educators are insisting that both learners require much higher levels of support than the school can provide.

As can be seen from the above case study, while the SBST will often have the resources and skills available at their schools and from the surrounding school community to be able to provide the required support to learners, there will be times when the SBST will need to access support from the DBST.

The role of the DBST in SIAS

The DBST's main responsibility is to assist SBSTs to access support programmes and provisioning from within the cluster or district and to plan, budget and programme for the additional support needs of the district.

All applications for outplacement – from the local school to full service or special schools – must be approved by the DBST.

Chapter 3.11, 5.16 and 7.36 explain the roles and responsibilities of the DBST in more detail.

NOTE: In some provinces, the district-level responsibilities are shared between the CBST and DBST. The main difference between the CBST and DBST's responsibilities is that the CBST deals with operational issues on a day-to-day basis, while the DBST coordinates activities across the circuits, deals with budgeting and provisioning matters across the circuits and must ratify CBST decisions and recommendations.

In the next unit, we move into the classroom, to look at your role in implementing SIAS.

Unit 5: SIAS in the classroom: screening and identifying barriers

Introduction

During the course of this workshop, we have looked at all the elements of the SIAS process and policy. In this unit we begin to look at implementation.

At the forefront of the SIAS process is the early and ongoing screening of learners in order to identify barriers to learning and development. Schools as inclusive centres of learning, care and support offer a supportive and caring environment geared toward responding to all learners' individual learning needs. As educators, your role is crucial. In this unit you will work with a range of screening and identification tools that can help you to assess the nature and extent of each learner's support needs and draw up an appropriate plan of action.

Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should:

- Understand the variety of barriers that might be present in a school.
- Understand the importance of early and ongoing identification of barriers to learning and development
- Identify barriers in a variety of contexts using a range of screening and identification tools

Resources

You need:

- Policy on SIAS 2014: Chapter 2; Forms: Learner Profile
- Education White Paper 6

Barriers to learning and development

The introduction to this manual gave a brief overview of barriers to learning and development. In this section we will look at the issue in more detail.

Barriers are often related to the context and they may arise out of interactions between different elements. For example, poor water and sanitation facilities at school can cause absenteeism amongst female learners during menstruation. When

essential learning time is regularly missed in this way, a learning difficulty could develop: the girls could consistently under-perform, placing them at a disadvantage compared to their male peers. This would reinforce gender inequalities.

HIV and AIDS provide another example. Educational barriers develop because of irregular attendance at school which could be due to increased responsibilities at home, made worse by financial worries, hunger, trauma of losing family and friends, negative attitudes toward infected and affected persons, educator absenteeism due to infection, and so on.

It is important that you look closely at the environment and how it might pose barriers to learning.

In the following task you will look at a scenario to identify possible barriers to learning and development as well as any enabling factors.

TASK 16: Identify potential barriers

You will be assigned one school (A, B, C or D) from the scenarios below. Read about your school and then complete the questionnaire that follows.

Four scenarios that represent diverse teaching and learning classroom contexts				
	SCHOOL A: Grade 1	SCHOOL B: Grade 2	SCHOOL C: Grade 7	SCHOOL D: Grade 4
Community	Rural school, mixed socio-economic levels.	Rural, poor	City suburban, middle class, but also some learners from less well-off homes	Big township with diverse languages, 70% unemployment, some homes in informal settlements
School	Mixed gender; language: 60% Tsonga / 40% Swazi mother tongue.	Full Service School; mixed gender; Sepedi and IsiZulu speaking.	Urban; mixed gender; all Afrikaans-speaking.	Urban Township; mixed gender.
LoLT	English	English	Afrikaans	Xhosa
T: L ratio	1:45	1:45	1:35	1:40
Classroom	Large space, old yet adequate furniture.	School needs some maintenance; enough classroom space; resource room.	Large, well equipped, class library and plenty of LTSM	New school building with enough furniture, ramps, accessible toilets, equipment; shortage of LTSM because of growth in learner numbers
Resources	School library, but not well	Large, shady school	Media centre; fully	Provincial online computer

	stocked; some learners have access to computers and the Internet; some equipment (OHP, photocopier).	grounds. Not enough equipment	equipped computer rooms, Internet access for all	room equipped with range of software, community library in neighbouring school.
Learners	20 girls, 23 boys Ages 6 - 8. 2 learners have learning difficulties. 1 learner has spelling problems 1 learner has vision barriers	20 boys, 25 girls ages 6 – 10 1 learner is hard of hearing owing to repeated, untreated middle ear infections. 1 learner has emotional difficulties and is withdrawn. 1 of the older learners is head of a household.	32 boys, Ages 13 - 15. 1 boy is gifted and has won the science expo. 4 boys come from a township where the LoLT was English. 1 boy is repeating the year. 2 boys have reading delays.	28 boys, 12 girls Ages 7 – 11 1 boy is using a wheelchair and has fine-motor problems. 6 learners experience barriers in reading and in maths. 1 learner has emotional problems and some learning difficulties. All learners are on the School Nutrition Programme. 10 learners walk 7 km to school
Educator	Staff of 12: The particular Learning Area educator is well qualified and experienced, but little OBE exposure One educator has specialised knowledge and experience in addressing barriers to learning School has an ILST.	One of 20 educators She has a two-year teacher's diploma, but 20 years' experience; some OBE training The school has an ILST	One of staff of 25, novice with only theoretical, tertiary OBE exposure No experience of teaching in SA context, but one year experience teaching in the UK	Educator has been at the school for 10 years Educator has been trained in the NCS Educator has no background in inclusive education or learner support

Questionnaire

List the potential barriers to teaching and learning that are present in your school (A/B/C/D).

School _____ (A/B/C/D)

Contextual barriers

Factors in the school environment that have the potential to prevent all learners from feeling welcome and reaching their full potential – the focus is on culture, dynamics and social context

Systemic barriers

Factors in the school and learning situation that are systemic in nature such as LOLT, resources, physical, material and human resource factors (include pedagogic factors here)

Socio-economic barriers

Factors like poverty, hunger, nutrition, lack of access to resources like transport, books, technology, late admission, etc.

Intrinsic barriers

Factors intrinsic to individual learners, like health and biological barriers or disabilities

Enabling factors

Factors that could improve opportunities for all learners to reach their full potential.



Main messages from above task

- Barriers are not necessarily intrinsic to the learner.
- Barriers may not be related to the circumstances arising from the learner's living and learning context.
- Existing barriers may be minimised or exacerbated by the context.
- Schools will need to problem-solve in order to offer support within their existing circumstances.

TASK 17: Audit your school

1. Now audit your own school by completing the questionnaire. List the potential barriers to teaching, learning and development, as well as the enabling factors, that are present in your school.
2. Remember to include factors like resources at neighbouring schools and the nature of your relationship with those schools, active NGOs and CBOs in the area and the potential services they could offer, relationships with various government departments and their efficacy (or lack thereof), social ills like alcohol abuse, etc.



Early and ongoing identification of barriers

It is critical that barriers are identified as early as possible and that the screening in ongoing, even after a successful support intervention. Read this case study to find out why.

TASK 18: Early and ongoing identification of barriers

Read Sipho's case study and then discuss the questions that follow.

Sipho's story

As a small child, Sipho lost an eye to cancer. His mother's employer paid for the treatment and for an artificial eye for Sipho who completely regained his health.

He enrolled in an ECD centre along with all his peers of the same age, enjoyed it very much, was popular and did well in reaching developmental milestones. Everyone knew he was blind in one eye and, from the time they were seated at desks, the teacher seated him in the classroom so he could see well with his good eye. His artificial eye was never an issue and his partial blindness never impacted negatively on anything he did.

He moved on to Grade R and continued to do well during the Foundation Phase.

When he was in Grade 4, his mother, the only breadwinner in the family, lost her job and the family moved to another area where Sipho was enrolled in the local school.

Within the Grade 4 year, Sipho changed from being a happy, bubbly, friendly child, interested in everything around him to a moody, silent and sad child. Suddenly he didn't want to go to school anymore. He developed regular stomach aches and headaches. His academic performance went downhill and he spent all his time at home alone in his room. He made no new friends.

Ms Gumede, his teacher, didn't notice the change because she had only just met him. She thought he was moody and a bit stupid – way below the average of the children she was teaching. She decided to leave him alone and let him slowly plod along behind the others. She had lots of children in her class and no time for "slow" learners with "bad" attitudes. When Sipho first came to her class, she asked the school secretary to get records from his old school. None arrived and she forgot all about it. Had she insisted on getting the records, she would have been surprised to find out that Sipho was in the top reading group at his previous school and that the teacher's comment on his last report had been "Sipho is a polite and friendly boy – a pleasure to teach".

Sipho's mother did notice the change, but she thought it was because the school was new to him and he hadn't made any friends yet.

But by the fourth term, the teacher could not ignore Sipho anymore and called his mother to the school. The parents of some grade ones and twos had complained – Sipho was scaring

the children by taking out his artificial eye and saying that he would take their eyes out too if he felt like it.

“What is this artificial eye business?” Ms Gumede asked. “I’ve never heard of such a thing! I screamed like a crazy person when I saw it in his hand for the first time last week. And then popping it back in his eye socket like that when it’s been on the floor. It’s terrible!”

“His eye falls out all the time because he has grown and it no longer fits him properly,” his mother explained to Ms Gumede. “The children in his class teased him a lot about it and one day he came home without it. Some older boys took it and only gave it back the next day.”

And so the whole story came out: how Sipho had been sick as a small child, how he was before the move, the way he’d changed since then and the possible reasons for it.

“I haven’t heard from Sipho’s father in 10 years and I have no job. We live with my mother now and she gets a pension, which is the only cash that comes into the house. I sometimes do cleaning and ironing work for my neighbours in return for food. Really, there is no money for essentials, never mind money for doctors and for another eye for Sipho!” his mother concluded.

“Oh my goodness!” thought the teacher to herself. “Things have been difficult for this little boy and I’ve not helped at all. I can say that I’ve probably made it worse. But I just didn’t know!”

A barrier to learning was picked up and effectively dealt with when Sipho was young. What does his later experience tell you about ongoing identification, assessment and monitoring?

The teacher assumed that Sipho’s classroom behaviour was a sign that he was stupid and she took his playground behaviour as a sign that he was a bully. Neither of these was true.

- Ms Gumede made assumptions without investigating. What questions could she have asked?
- What implications does labelling and making assumptions have for learning and teaching?

At the end, Ms Gumede said to herself: “Oh my goodness! Things have been difficult for this little boy and I’ve not helped at all. I can even say that I’ve probably made it worse. But I just didn’t know!”

- Ms Gumede is self-reflecting.
- What is self-reflection?
- Why is it important for educators?

The teacher only noticed in the fourth term that Sipho was blind in one eye. If she had noticed earlier, how would this have affected her planning for effective learning and teaching?

Sipho was experiencing great difficulties, many of which could have been prevented. Brainstorm a list of things that could have been done to support him and prevent many of his difficulties.

Main messages from Sipho's story

- The **early identification** of barriers is critical. This can be before a child even enters the schooling system, e.g. Department of Health.
- A **documented history of support** is important. It needs to be kept up to date and made available to teachers to ensure that they are informed and can plan accordingly. This is still important, even if the original support intervention was successful.
- **Ongoing screening** is important because new barriers could develop.
- **Proper identification** of barriers is important. Incorrect labelling of learners might be just as bad as not identifying a barrier at all.
- **Self-reflection** is an important skill for teachers to develop, not only in relation to barrier identification, but to improve teaching in general.

Now that you know how important it is to identify barriers, how do you go about it? There are a number of ways to do this. In the next section, we look at a few tools that you can use.

Introducing tools for screening and identification of barriers

Identifying barriers is all about getting to know learners and finding out as much as possible about each learner. Do this task to come up with ideas.

TASK 19: Getting to know your learners

Brainstorm ideas about how to find out more about learners and their lives, both in and outside of school. These are all ways that can be used to screen and identify learners who are vulnerable to exclusion, low achievement and marginalisation.

The screening and identification process starts from the moment you first make contact with a learner. It does not only take place in formal assessment situations. You need to get a picture of strengths and areas of difficulty.

You should:

- Gather as much documented information as possible about learners' history
- Observe learners at all times
- Talk to other educators, learners and parents
- Conduct classroom assessment
- Assess learning styles
- Study examples of the learners' work (portfolio)
- Get to know your learners, both inside the classroom and out

Although there are many tools, we will now look at the following screening tools:

- Learner Profile
- Admission
- Observation
- Talking to parents and caregivers
- Screening checklists

Each is dealt with in turn.

The Learner Profile as a screening tool

Each learner must have a Learner Profile. It is a pre-printed folder that schools get from the Provincial Department of Education.

The Learner Profile is a continuous record of relevant information about each learner's progress and performance throughout their school career from Grade R to Grade 12.

It assists an educator in the next grade to understand the learner better and respond in an appropriate way.

It must be safeguarded by the school management. It is kept at the school but must follow the learner from one school to the next. (It must not however be given to the learner or the learner's parents/guardians to take to the next school.)

The new school's principal must request it from the previous school within three months of the learner's admittance.

It is confidential and no information (like health status of learner) may be given to anyone without the written permission of the learner or parents/guardian.

Parents or appropriate professionals may view it on request, in the presence of the school management.

It must be kept for a period of three years after a learner leaves school, and then be destroyed.

The Learner Profile is the first document in the pack of documents at the back of the SIAS policy document. Complete the following task to familiarise yourself with it.

TASK 20: Introduction to the Learner Profile

Look at the Learner Profile and then answer these questions.

1. What is the purpose of the Learner Profile?
2. When should it be completed and by whom?
3. What information does the form document? (What are the various sections?)
4. Why is each of these sections important?
5. What does it mean if a section is marked with an asterisk?
6. How often should it be updated?
7. What is your role in ensuring that these forms are available and completed as required? What is your role in the process?

Now that you know what information is in the Learner Profile, do the following task to think about why it is an important screening tool.

TASK 21: Why is the Learner Profile an important screening tool?

Discuss these questions with reference to Siphon's story:

1. How does the Learner Profile help with incorporating the principles of inclusion into our education system?

2. How would an up-to-date Learner Profile have helped Ms Gumede to understand Siphon and his needs?
 3. Why does the Learner Profile include a section on outstanding achievements?
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Admission as a screening tool

Do you think the admissions process could be used as a tool for screening and identifying barriers? Complete the following task to think about this issue in more detail.

TASK 22: Admission and vulnerability assessment

Discuss the following questions:

1. How could admission be used as an opportunity to gather information about learners?
 2. Who does admission at your school?
 3. What kind of information do you ask for at admissions?
 4. Do you conduct any kind of vulnerability assessment as part of your admissions procedures? What kind of information do you gather?
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Classroom observation as a screening tool

Observation is a very important tool for educators. It is a skill that will improve with practice.

What does an educator observe?

There are many things. Some examples are:

- Behaviour
- Emotional development
- Communication (verbal, non-verbal, ability to express needs and beliefs)
- Relationships (with peers, adults)
- Attitude (including diligence)
- Appearance (dress, cleanliness, care, hygiene)
- Performance
- Health
- Happiness

How does an educator observe?

Observation can be planned or unplanned, formal or informal, and must be an ongoing part of the education process.

Formal: Within the formal learning environment, for example, observing in the classroom while learners are working.

Informal: Outside of the formal learning environment, for example, observing learners while they are talking to their friends at break.

Planned: You plan the observation in advance so you know who, what, how and where you will be observing.

Unplanned: You notice something. The “story” (a record of an interesting incident) can be just as useful as planned and formal observations. Educators must keep their eyes open at all times and notice what is happening around them!

TASK 23: How does an educator observe?

Choose a word from the list to fill in the gaps in the paragraph below:

formal, informal, planned, unplanned

In order to get round to observing all learners fairly, an educator planned to observe learners in groups for a week at a time (_____ observation). On one day of the week, she decided to observe them while they were working on maths problems in class (_____ observation) and while they were getting ready to go home after the bell had rung (_____ observation). During this day, a learner who was not part of the group being observed burst into tears when he was asked to do a creative writing exercise. The educator noted down details of the incident in her Observation Book (_____ observation).

Do you observe your learners? One way to observe effectively is to record your observations in an observation book. Do the following task to think about this some more.

TASK 24: Using an observation book

Discuss the following questions:

1. Why record observation?
2. How can you use it to help identify barriers?
3. What should an observation book look like?

Make sure that notes recorded in the observation book are meaningful and informative so that they can be used as useful evidence of behaviour. For example: “Peter is ADHD” is a useless label because it does not give any real idea of how Peter behaves. It is better to describe learners’ behavioural traits rather than label them (for example, “Peter finds it very difficult to sit still”). This approach will be more helpful when planning action. Remember that Peter’s “condition” is not necessarily the barrier.

Observation can take many forms. You can invite another educator into your classroom to observe (both learners and yourself) and provide insight. You could also consider peer observation.

A good observer:

- Pays careful attention to what is happening inside and outside the classroom
- Avoids making subjective judgments
- Observes and records strengths, as well as difficulties
- Asks him/herself questions and thinks about a wide range of reasons for certain types of behaviour
- Does not jump to conclusions or label learners too quickly
- Notices whether there are patterns to certain types of behaviour (for example, they occur at certain times of the day or week, or during certain activities or lessons)
- Discusses observations with other people, for example conferring with other educators (remember, that these are shared confidences to help the child, not gossip)
- Records and keeps detailed notes of observations (in the Observation Book), instead of relying on memory
- Respects the confidentiality of the learner (and doesn’t leave the Observation Book lying around for others to view)
- Records useful and meaningful comments about observations.

TASK 25: How could observation help to identify barriers?

With reference to Siphó's story, Ms Gumede had a lot of children in her class and battled to find the time to conduct proper classroom observation. In what ways could proper observation have helped Ms Gumede to identify Siphó's barriers to learning?

Parent and learner interviews as a screening tool

Education White Paper 6 stresses the importance of establishing partnerships with both parents and learners. The SIAS process requires it. Do you think it would be useful for educators to have guidelines on dealing with parents? The following story provides a good example of how NOT to conduct a parent meeting.

TASK 26: Talking to parents

Read the story and then answer the questions that follow.

Linda's parents asked for a meeting with her class teacher. They had met him briefly at the parents' information evening at the start of the year. When they arrived for the meeting straight after school, a lot of Linda's classmates were still packing their bags in the classroom.

Mr Jones, the class teacher, welcomed them and invited them to sit down. The four of them sat down together – Linda, her parents and Mr Jones.

"So," said Mr Jones, "you wanted to meet with me. Please do not tell me that you are concerned about Linda's progress. I presume you know that she is not a genius, and her problems are worsened because she can't sit still and concentrate for even one minute. Hyperactive does not even begin to describe it! Frightening!

"She is very needy and demanding and I think that you should have been much firmer with her when she was smaller. I would really like to know how you discipline this child at home. She must drive you mad! What do you do?"

"Um, er, well," said Linda's mother, looking around at the classmates listening in, "Linda does have lots of energy and I, well, we try to have a system of rewards for good behaviour and..."

"Hey Timmy," Mr Jones shouted to one of the learners, "stop throwing that ball around the classroom!"

He turned back to Linda's parents and said, "Well you know, you are going to have to try a lot harder. I don't think Linda is coping at all well with this year and she will probably have to repeat next year. We can try some things in the classroom, but they are unlikely to work. I'm not going to be able to help her if she won't sit down and behave in class. Okay?"

"Okay, well," Linda's dad started to say. "That's why we wanted to talk to you. We feel that..."

"Well thanks a lot for this meeting. So you'll work on her behaviour and discipline at home okay?" said Mr Jones. "Sorry to rush like this, but I have to get to the bank before it closes. Goodbye and thanks for coming in."

1. Mr Jones did not deal with the meeting very successfully.
 - Give at least five examples of how his meeting style was problematic.

- Think of a better way of dealing with each issue.
2. Make a list of guidelines for Mr Jones on how to talk to parents.
 3. What do you think of the idea of Linda being present at the meeting? Give reasons for what you say.
 4. If you had to write guidelines for conducting interviews with learners, how would they differ from the guidelines for parent meetings?

Screening checklists

Screening checklists provide useful information on specific behaviours that may need further investigation. Or, they might identify barriers or potential barriers to learning and development. (They can also be useful to help develop specific teaching objectives in response.)

The checklist in the next task is a very general one that you can use if you find it useful. It covers areas applicable to learners from Grade R right through to Grade 12.

It offers general guidelines and pointers about the kinds of issues relevant to different age groups. Because it is so broad, it is only a guide and offers early warning signals. Your own checklists may be grade specific and therefore have assessment criteria listed and offer more in depth screening.

TASK 27: Educator screening questionnaire

1. Read the block at the top of the checklist, which explains how it works.
2. Go through the headings.
 - In which area will you make a mark/tick?
 - What is the difference between the shaded and unshaded blocks?
 - What blocks might you have ticked for Siphso? Why do you say so?

<p>Shaded areas <input type="checkbox"/> indicate characteristics most likely to apply at that stage in life. However, children develop at different rates in different ways, so these are a guide only. Blank blocks indicate that the characteristic is unlikely to apply</p> <p>Mark the characteristics that apply to the learner. Remember that most people experience difficulties of one sort or another from time to time. In this exercise, you are looking for persistent and ongoing patterns of difficulties or behaviour that could indicate a barrier to learning. The more signs you mark, the more chance there is that the learner is at risk of, or is experiencing, a difficulty that needs attention. This checklist is a guide to help detect early warning signs.</p>				

Vision				
Complains of headaches, itchy or burning eyes				
Has red, painful or discharging eyes				
Has difficulty seeing the blackboard				
Puts his/her head close to the book to work				
Hearing				
Has fluid coming out of his/her ears				
Speaks loudly and not very clearly				
Watches people's faces very carefully when they speak				
Seem easily distracted				
Often asks you to repeat what you've said				
Health in general				
Has spots, rashes or abnormal swellings				
Appears tired and drowsy early in the morning				
Seems thinner or smaller than the average child				
Has worms or blood in the urine				
Sneezes, wheezes, coughs or breathes fast, often after a little exercise				
Has discoloured teeth or holes or pain in the teeth				
Falls down, jerks or loses awareness when being spoken to				
Gross and fine motor skills				
Appears awkward and clumsy, dropping, spilling, or knocking things over				
Has limited success with games and activities that demand eye-hand coordination (eg, piano, basketball, baseball)				
Has trouble with buttons, hooks, snaps, zippers and trouble learning to tie shoes				
Creates art work that is immature for age				
Demonstrates poor ability to color or write 'within the lines'				
Grasps pencil awkwardly, resulting in poor handwriting				
Experiences difficulty using small objects or items that demand precision (i.e., Legos, puzzle pieces, tweezers, scissors)				
Dislikes and avoids writing and drawing tasks				

<p>Shaded areas <input type="checkbox"/> indicate characteristics most likely to apply at that stage in life. However, children develop at different rates in different ways, so these are a guide only. Blank blocks indicate that the characteristic is unlikely to apply</p> <p>Mark the characteristics that apply to the learner. Remember that most people experience difficulties of one sort or another from time to time. In this exercise, you are looking for persistent and ongoing patterns of difficulties or behaviour that could indicate a barrier to learning. The more signs you mark, the more chance there is that the learner is at risk of, or is experiencing, a difficulty that needs attention. This checklist is a guide to help detect early warning signs.</p>	Preschool, Grade R	Grades 1 - 4	Grades 5 - 8	Grades 9 - 12
Language				
Demonstrates early delays in learning to speak				
Has trouble naming people or objects				
Has difficulty staying on topic				
Inserts invented words into conversation				
Has difficulty re-telling what has just been said				
Uses vague, imprecise language and has a limited vocabulary				
Demonstrates slow and halting speech, using lots of fillers (i.e., uh, um, and, you know, so)				
Uses poor grammar or misuses words in conversation				
Mispronounces words frequently				
Confuses words with others that sound similar				
Inserts 'slips of the tongue' into conversation (i.e., a rolling stone gathers no moths; he was a man of great statue)				
Has difficulty rhyming				
Has limited interest in books or stories				
Has difficulty understanding instructions or directions				
Has trouble understanding idioms, proverbs, colloquialisms, humor, and/or puns (take regional and cultural factors into account)				
Has difficulty with pragmatic skills (ie, understands the relationship between speaker and listener, stays on topic, gauges the listeners degree of knowledge, makes inferences based on a speaker's verbal and non-verbal cues)				
Reading				
Confuses similar-looking letters and numbers				
Has difficulty recognizing and remembering sight words				

Frequently loses place while reading				
Confuses similar-looking words (i.e., beard/bread)				
Reverses letter order in words (i.e., saw/was)				
Demonstrates poor memory for printed words				
Has weak comprehension of ideas and themes				
Has significant trouble learning to read				
Has trouble naming letters				
Has problems associating letter and sounds, understanding the difference between sounds in words, or blending sounds into words				
Randomly guesses at unfamiliar words rather than using word analysis skills				
Reads slowly				
Substitutes or leaves out words while reading				
Has poor retention of new vocabulary				
Dislikes and avoids reading or reads reluctantly				
Written language				
Dislikes and avoids writing and copying				
Demonstrates delays in learning to copy and write				
Writing is messy and incomplete, with many cross outs and erasures				
Has difficulty remembering shapes of letters and numerals				
Frequently reverses letters, numbers and symbols				
Uses uneven spacing between letters and words, and has trouble staying 'on the line'				
Copies inaccurately (i.e., confuses similar-looking letters and numbers)				
Spells poorly and inconsistently (i.e., the same word is spelt differently within the same document)				
Has difficulty proofreading and self-correcting work				
Has difficulty preparing outlines and organizing written assignments				
Fails to develop ideas in writing so written work is incomplete and too brief				
Expresses written ideas in a disorganized way				

<p>Shaded areas <input type="checkbox"/> indicate characteristics most likely to apply at that stage in life. However, children develop at different rates in different ways, so these are a guide only. Blank blocks indicate that the characteristic is unlikely to apply</p> <p>Mark the characteristics that apply to the learner. Remember that most people experience difficulties of one sort or another from time to time. In this exercise, you are looking for persistent and ongoing patterns of difficulties or behaviour that could indicate a barrier to learning. The more signs you mark, the more chance there is that the learner is at risk of, or is experiencing, a difficulty that needs attention. This checklist is a guide to help detect early warning signs.</p>	Preschool, Grade R	Grades 1 - 4	Grades 5 - 8	Grades 9 - 12
Numeracy and mathematics				
Has difficulty with simple counting and one-to-one correspondence between number symbols and items/objects				
Difficulty mastering number knowledge (i.e. recognition of quantities without counting)				
Has difficulty with learning and memorizing basic addition and subtraction facts				
Has difficulty learning strategic counting principles (i.e. by 2, 5, 10, 100)				
Poorly aligns numbers resulting in computation errors				
Has difficulty estimating quantity (i.e., quantity, value)				
Has difficulty with comparisons (i.e., less than, greater than)				
Has trouble telling time				
Has trouble conceptualizing the passage of time				
Has difficulty counting rapidly or making calculations				
Has trouble learning multiplication tables, formulas and rules				
Has trouble interpreting graphs and charts				
Social/Emotional				
Does not pick up on other people's mood/feelings (i.e., may say the wrong thing at the wrong time)				
May not detect or respond appropriately to teasing				
Has difficulty 'joining in' and maintaining positive social status in a peer group				
Has trouble knowing how to share/express feelings				
Has trouble 'getting to the point' (i.e., gets bogged down in details in conversation)				
Has difficulty with self-control when frustrated				
Has difficulty dealing with group pressure, embarrassment and unexpected challenges				
Has trouble setting realistic social goals				

Has trouble evaluating personal social strengths and challenges				
Is doubtful of own abilities and is prone to attribute successes to luck or outside influences rather than hard work				
Attention				
Fails to pay close attention to details or makes careless mistakes in schoolwork, work, or other activities				
Has difficulty sustaining attention in work tasks or play activities				
Does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish schoolwork, chores, or duties in the workplace				
Has difficulty organizing tasks and activities				
Avoids, dislikes, or is reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort such as homework and organizing work tasks				
Loses things consistently that are necessary for tasks/activities (i.e., toys, school assignments, pencils, books, tools)				
Is easily distracted by outside influences				
Is forgetful in daily/routine activities				
Is excitable or impulsive and does not think things through				
Other				
Confuses left and right				
Has a poor sense of direction; slow to learn the way around a new place; easily lost or confused in unfamiliar surroundings				
Finds it hard to judge speed and distance (i.e., hard to play certain games, drive a car)				
Trouble reading charts and maps				
Is disorganized and poor at planning				
Often loses things				
Is slow to learn new games and master puzzles				
Has difficulty listening and taking notes at the same time				
Performs inconsistently on tasks from one day to the next				
Has difficulty applying skills from one situation to another				
Curriculum (overall performance)				
Generally performs poorly				
Does not meet outcomes/competence descriptors/assessment standards in certain learning areas				
Does not meet minimum outcomes/competence descriptors/assessment standards in				

most learning areas				
Consistently excels; outstanding achievement in meeting the outcomes/competence descriptors/assessment standards in certain learning areas				
Consistently excels; outstanding achievement in meeting the outcomes/competence descriptors/assessment standards in most learning areas				

(Adapted from Learning Disabilities Checklist, National Center for Learning Disabilities, www.LD.org)

During this unit, we have explored many screening tools to help you identify barriers. Now test your knowledge about screening tools for identifying barriers to learning.

TASK 28: Quiz

Work in two teams, Team A and Team B. Each team has eight questions. Your facilitator will ask each group in turn the question marked for their group. If the answer is correct, they get two points. If they get it wrong, the other team gets a chance to answer their question for one point. The winner is the team that has the most points at the end.

Questions		
1	Team A	Why is it important for educators to identify learners with barriers to learning?
	Team B	Why is it important to have ongoing screening all the way through a learner's school life? (Why can't you just screen once? Why must you keep screening?)
2	A	Name any two barriers to learning.
	B	Name another two barriers to learning.
3	A	Name one way to identify vulnerable learners during admission.
	B	Name another way to identify vulnerable learners during admission.
4	A	Admission is a good time to conduct a Vulnerability Assessment of a learner. Why?
	B	How will a Vulnerability Assessment help to identify learners with additional support needs? (If it is not academic, what does it have to do with teachers and learning?)
5	A	What is the name of the document that each learner must have from Grade R till the end of Grade 12?
	B	Can the learner take his Learner Profile from his old to new school? Give a reason.
6	A	Name two things that must be in the Learner Profile.
	B	Why should the educator look at the Learner Profile?
7	A	When should the teacher look at the Learner Profile?

	B	Name one way to identify learners with barriers to learning in the classroom.
8	A	Name another way to identify learners with barriers to learning in the classroom.
	B	Teacher observation is very important. Name two things an educator could observe about learners.

After identifying barriers, you need to draw up, implement and monitor action plans to support individual learners and implement and apply appropriate classroom strategies. Although there are many barriers requiring many different support strategies, a key support organiser is to provide curriculum support by differentiating the curriculum and assessment.

This is one of your key roles and it is the subject of the next unit.

Unit 6: SIAS in the classroom: curriculum support

Introduction

In the previous unit you learnt about screening tools to help identify barriers. Once identified, you need to plan support. In this unit we focus on one of the most critical of all support organisers, curriculum differentiation.

Outcomes

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Understand the parameters and strategies that shape the process of responding to learner diversity in the classrooms through the curriculum
- Know how to offer the same curriculum to learners while simultaneously ensuring variations in content, mode of delivery and assessment processes to accommodate all learners
- Understand how to create a challenging and supportive learning context for all learners.
- Gain insight into how educators can differentiate the strategies and techniques they use to assess learner performance in a fair and just manner
- Explain how curriculum differentiation is built into the SIAS
- Understand their role in this aspect of support

Resources

You need:

- SIAS Policy: Chapter 4.14

We all are aware that no classroom has a completely homogenous group of learners. Learners in a classroom grouping are never the same. They do not have the same prior knowledge, they do not learn in the same way, they do not have the same learning styles, they do not have the same interests, and they do not have the same levels of functioning in respect of a skill or concept they are learning. Educators need to understand that every classroom has learners with diverse needs, including a classroom in a special school that may be organised according to a particular

category of disability. This means that an educator needs to accept that teaching a lesson in just one way will not reach every learner in the class.

A good teacher makes the adaptations and modifications required to reach every learner at the point at which they are in learning a skill for a concept, and to guide them to the next level of learning and understanding. Key to this whole process is curriculum differentiation. Equally important is that how learners are assessed and how they are expected to demonstrate that learning has taken place must be based on the needs of learners. Assessment needs to be differentiated so that the process and the tools are responsive to the diversity in the classroom. In other words, we need to assess the academic performance of learners, their level of performance or acquisition of a skill or concept being taught, and their learning characteristics by employing a range of tools and techniques.

The NCS and the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) are flexible and do allow for curriculum differentiation and differentiated forms of assessment. The NCS and CAPS are underpinned by the principles of social justice, inclusivity, equity and social rights. Educators are urged to take into account barriers to learning and/or assessment that may emerge in the different Learning Areas, and find creative ways to respond to and address them. For example, more time can be allowed for assessment and the completion of a task. Furthermore, the CAPS learning outcomes do not stipulate content, learning context or teaching methods and approaches, as these should be determined by learner needs.

The *Guidelines on Responding to Learner Diversity in the classroom through Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements* (Department of Basic Education, 2011) are a useful resource for educators. The Guidelines stress that as educators we have an important responsibility in making sure that all learners from whatever background feel included and affirmed in the classroom. We should constantly reflect on and monitor our own beliefs, attitudes and behaviours when responding to our learners. Some of the ways in which we can do this are:

- Recognising any biases or stereotypes we may have absorbed
- Treating each learner as an individual, and respecting each learner for whom he or she is
- Avoiding the use of language that is biased and that undermines certain groups of learners
- Refraining from remarks that make assumptions about our learner experiences.
- Considering the unique needs of learners when designing learning programmes and lessons
- Constantly re-evaluating our methods of teaching and assessing learners in a diverse setting
- Considering different approaches, methodologies and strategies when teaching in our classroom

- Creating opportunities for all learners to fully participate in activities, and to be appropriately challenged
- Planning teaching according to the developmental needs of learners along the continuum of learning
- Creating a safe, non-threatening environment (free of ridicule, rejection, fear, pressure, intimidation) that encourages learning and makes learning fun

In the sections below, we will examine the processes of curriculum differentiation and differentiated assessment in more detail and engage with what these processes look like in practice.

Differentiating the curriculum

Curriculum differentiation refers to the process of mediating the National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements to address the needs of all learners in a class. Simply put, it is about matching curriculum and instruction with learners' achievement levels, interests, learning styles, levels of prior knowledge etc. through a variety of strategies and creative techniques, including carefully selecting the breadth and depth of the curriculum to suit learner needs; learner grouping; classroom management; teaching and learning strategies.

Why is Curriculum Differentiation necessary?

- It ensures that teaching is responsive to learners' needs
- It aims to counter the impact of intrinsic and / or extrinsic barriers to learning that individual learners may experience
- It ensures that all learners can make continuous progress in learning
- It ensures that all learners are respected, valued and affirmed as teaching is planned to meet the diverse needs of everyone in the class
- It ensures that learners use current skills and competences in the development of new skills
- It prevents a mismatch between the learner's acquired skills and competences and the learning activities designed for the class

What are the different points at which curriculum differentiation can happen?

Curriculum differentiation points

The three key points at which curriculum differentiation happens are:

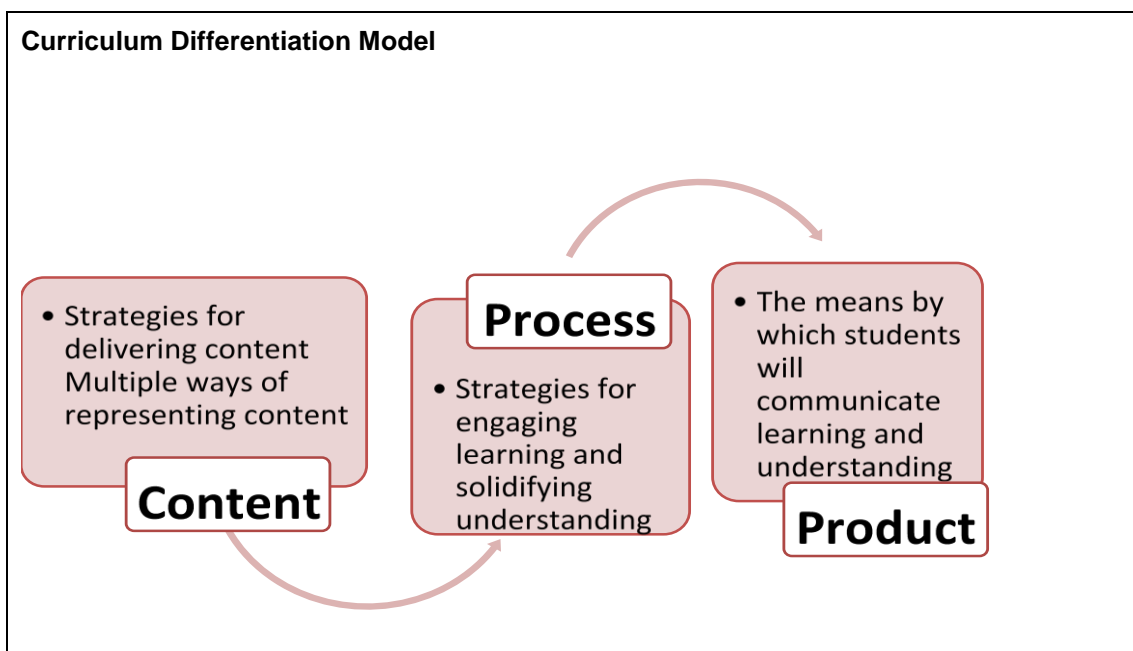
Content: Multiple ways of representing content; strategies for delivering content

Process: Strategies, teaching and methods (pedagogy), learning support

materials, activities for engaging in learning and strengthening understanding (How will learners make sense of the content?)

Product: Means by which learners will communicate learning and understanding (How will learners demonstrate what they are learning or have learned?)

Study the model below.



Reflect on these scenarios:

- Educators need to be mindful that learners come from different backgrounds and will not have the same prior knowledge. Teachers of literacy, for example, need to be aware that when reading a text there may be concepts that all learners have not had experience of, and therefore, creative ways have to be found to mediate such concepts.
- Certain learners may not be proficient in the Language of Teaching and Learning, such as English, but may have acquired a concept and have an understanding of it in the mother tongue. Careful teacher mediation is necessary during a lesson.

Differentiation is responsive teaching rather than one-size-fits-all teaching.

Important Learning Points!

- Differentiating instruction is not the same as individualised instruction. Every learner is not learning something different. They are all learning the same thing, but in different ways.
- Differentiating instruction is about presenting the same task in different ways and at different levels, so that all learners can understand and complete it in their own ways.
- Successful differentiated instruction requires that the educator has a sound understanding of developmental learning; the backgrounds of learners; an in-depth knowledge of the curriculum; and a range of skills and techniques for assessing learners.
- Differentiating instruction is not about using groups that never change.
- Differentiating instruction is not about isolating struggling learners within the class.
- Differentiated instruction does not mean never planning whole class activities with all learners involved in the same task.

TASK 29: Read and reflect on a case study

Read the case study below.

Reflect on it as we engage for the rest of session.

CASE STUDY: Mr Malele's Grade 5 class

Mr Malele is a teacher at Mabapha Primary school, an ordinary public school in the Limpopo province. He teaches English First Additional Language (EFAL). His EFAL grade 5 class has 28 learners: 18 girls and 10 boys. Most of the learners in Mr Malele's class can cope with the schoolwork without help and a few with minimum help. Five of his learners have very good reading and creative writing skills. One of these learners won a creative writing competition in February this year. The class has three learners who are experiencing some difficulties.

One of these learners is Ziggy, a 13-year-old boy. Ziggy loves numbers and his Maths skills are very good. He can solve difficult Maths problems. He loves Maths lessons and gets very upset when the teacher changes to other subjects. Ziggy has difficulty with oral reading, reading comprehension and writing. His reading and writing skills are at Grade 2 level. He also does not react well to people and situations and has always been fearful of new experiences. He gets upset when his routine is changed. He is obsessed with space and can spend hours alone at home

looking at old space magazine that he got from his friend Rhandzani. He also likes using wires and other materials to build aeroplanes and helicopters. Very often he talks to his creations and instructs them how to fly. If not interrupted, he will spend hours making and playing with his creations.

There is also Abongile who is fun-loving, loves school and sometimes gets other learners into trouble because of her talking during class. Her fun outgoing nature makes her popular among the other learners. Abongile is very disorganised, loses her books and pens and finds sitting still in class difficult. Very often she does things without thinking them through, resulting in her making unnecessary mistakes, which she quickly corrects when her attention is drawn to them. Although she can solve simple problems she finds it difficult to solve problems that require abstract thinking. She finds reading and writing difficult and takes time to learn new information. She can read Grade 3 readers but her reading is always rushed and she makes a lot of mistakes because she guesses words. She loves outdoors activities and sport. She does not like tasks that require her to sit. Although, because of her age, she is in Grade 5, her performance in most subjects is at about Grade 3 level, especially reading and writing. However, her oral English language skills are very well developed. She can express herself using syntactically/grammatically correct sentences. Her oral presentations are also humorous and very dramatic.

Alu has just joined the school and he takes time to learn concepts. He needs a lot of individual attention from the teacher and benefits from this help. He takes his work seriously and really tries his best. He does not give up until he gets the desired outcome. Very often he asks his friend Monde to help him. Once he learns something, he loves it when the teacher asks him to show the others what he has learnt. He is very good at explaining and demonstrating what he has learnt and how he has learnt it. He is an excellent soccer player and plays for the local soccer team. He loves reading and spends a lot of time looking through books at school. At home he spends a lot of time looking through his elder brother's old soccer magazines because he loves soccer and wants to learn more about it. However he struggles with his reading, which is at a Grade 1 level. He worries about his reading difficulty and often asks his friend Monde why it is difficult for him to read like other children.

Tsakane was born with cerebral palsy. He has just joined the school from a special school that offered boarding facilities. The special school was far from his home and he had to stay there for the whole term, only coming home every three months. He missed his family and friends when he was at boarding school. Tsakane's previous school also recommended that he be enrolled at an ordinary school because his

support needs are very low and he does not need to be at a school that offers high support. Tsakane has difficulty controlling the movement of body muscles especially his arms and hands, which have become stiff. He has uncontrollable jerky body movements and his speech is not very clear. It takes the teacher a long time to understand what he is saying. But his friend Siphon, who sits next to him in class, can understand what he is saying most of the time. Although he can walk using crutches he does this with a lot of difficulty. So very often he uses a wheel chair to get around the school. He gets stiff and sore if he sits in one position for too long and needs to take breaks to lie down. Tsakane is bright but because of his speech most people describe him as a “slow learner”. His language skills are better than what most people think. His writing and reading skills are at a Grade 4 level and English oral language (grammar and semantics) skills are at Grade 5 level. Tsakane has a wonderful sense of humour. He loves his new school because he can go home after school and play with his friends. Because of his speech and movement difficulties district officials organised a computer and a head stick attached to a headband to help him type on the computer. This computer has a software programme that can speak the sentences he has constructed out loud. Other children are envious of his computer and very often ask him if they can use it. He allows them to use it and enjoys showing them how it works.

Now let us look at some of the key points at which differentiation can take place in more depth.

Differentiating content

Content is what we teach and what the learner is expected to learn and understand. It includes facts, concepts and skills that learners will acquire within the learning environment. Sometimes educators are able to select the content to suit the learners' needs. Sometimes it is school policy that prescribes the content of the curriculum; and sometimes it is a combination of educator and policy. Differentiating the content allows learners the opportunity to start at different places in the curriculum and/or proceed at different paces.

Example:

In a lesson on fractions (lesson content), the educator can adjust the skill being taught to suit the skill levels of different learners or groups in the class. Some learners may work on adding fractions with common denominators, but other learners may work on adding fractions with unlike denominators. You can see that

both groups are learning about fractions, but the specific skill between the two groups differs.

Content is what a learner should come to know (facts), understand (concepts and principles), and be able to do (skills) as a result of a given topic of study from the curriculum (and can be seen in a lesson (e.g. the *story* in a reading lesson), learning experience (a nature walk – *learning about insects*), or a unit of study (focussing on *fractions*).

At what levels do we differentiate the content?

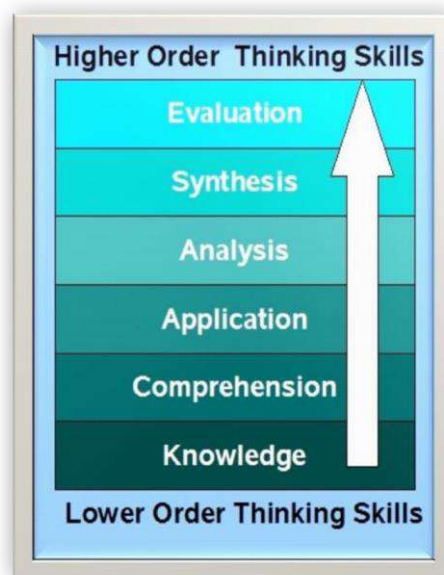
There are three key levels at which this can happen.

- **Abstractness:** In any curriculum we have facts, definitions, descriptions, patterns, relationships, key concepts and generalisations. Example: Depending on learners' levels of functioning, they might access the content at a concrete or abstract level. Certain learners might need to work with concrete objects, such as small stones as counters before they are ready to work with abstract numbers. It is the responsibility of the educator to ensure that the content is adapted at the level of the learner. We cannot assume that all learners can learn easily at an abstract level.
- **Complexity:** Many aspects of the curriculum can be complex and difficult to understand for some learners. For example, understanding the different characters in a story is a more complex task than just relating the plot of the story. We also need to contextualise topics rather than present facts in isolation.
- **Variety:** To cater for learners' levels of functioning, prior learning and their interests we need to expand the curriculum. For example, a child who has excellent reading skills might be given new and varied material to stop her from being bored.

Using Bloom's Taxonomy to differentiate content

Content can be varied according to Bloom's Taxonomy.

- Unfamiliar with concepts – complete tasks at lower levels such as knowledge, comprehension, application
- Partial mastery – focus on application and analysis
- High level of mastery – emphasize evaluation and synthesis



Learning outcomes can be set in a hierarchical order by the educator. At the lowest level learners are given tasks that require them to know, memorise, repeat and list information. At the higher levels learners are required to judge, criticise, resolve, invent, and make recommendations.

See below how the educator can use different verbs to structure questions and set activities regarding the content. This involves learners in thinking at a particular level and at his or her levels of functioning. If the educator asks learners to “invent” or “compose” something, she is asking them to perform a task at the *synthesis* level of thinking. If she asks them to “inquire” or “classify” she is getting learners to think at the *analysis* level.

If educators apply Bloom's taxonomy in this way, they can understand how the content can be differentiated for different learners functioning at different levels of proficiency. Below the topic “domesticated animals” introduced by the educator at a primary school is used to show how the content can be differentiated at different levels by educators. Children will differ in the levels at which they will engage with the content of the curriculum

Level I: Knowledge (knowing isolated information)

Know list recall repeat record

Define locate memorise restate identify

Task: Identify the different breeds of dogs in your neighbourhood.

Level II: Comprehension (understanding/making connections)

Discuss describe explain match find

Reword review translate express report

Task: Interview people who own pets. Make a survey of people who own pets in your street/neighbourhood.

Level III: Application (using the knowledge in a variety of ways)

Display simulate apply demonstrate practice

Compute present sketch use.

Task: Draw a collage about dog care and grooming.

Level IV: Analysis (comparing and contrasting information)

Analyse compare contrast probe inquire

Investigate classify organise examine dissect

Task: Compare and contrast the physical and social characteristics of dogs and cats.

Level V: Synthesis (developing new information)

Compose invent develop construct create

Hypothesise predict speculate role-play generalise

Task: Develop a cartoon based on the relationship between an animal and a child.

Level VI: Evaluation (expressing personal values)

Judge infer evaluate advise

Conclude consider determine recommend

Task: Write an editorial for your local newspaper about the advantages and disadvantages of having a pet animal

We can see a number of different outcomes can be required of learners. The educator needs to adapt the outcomes to the skill level and ability of her learners. Other examples of tasks that can used to differentiate content are listed below:

Diary, graph, write a letter, questionnaire,
 Model, diagram, invention, TV commercial,
 Game, map, story, timeline, scrapbook, write a poem,
 Song, speech, make a poster,
 Puppet show, make a pamphlet, painting, do a travelogue,
 Construct a game, debate, sell a product,
 News article, TV game show, bumper stickers, logos,
 Timeline, crossword puzzle

Example of differentiating the content in a reading lesson

Study how the content (story) is differentiated in this reading lesson in a grade 5 class for groups of learners at three different levels of proficiency in reading. The aim is to ensure that children at different levels have comprehended the story and to engage them in meaning making.

Differentiating content in a reading lesson (adapted from Smith, 2013)

Draw a picture of the main character.	Perform a play that shows the conclusion of a story.	Write a song about one of the main events in the story or a character.
Write a poem about two main events in the story.	Make a poster that shows the order of events in the story.	Dress up as your favourite character and perform a speech telling others who you are. OR Name and draw a person you know who is like one of the characters in the story.
Create a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting three characters in the story	Use a sequence cartoon or a timeline to describe at least six events in the story.	Write a new ending for the story.

TASK 30: Differentiate the content of Grade 5 EFAL – Reading and viewing

Look at the curriculum requirements for a G5 EFAL reading and viewing lesson.

Read a story: folk tale

- Pre-reading: predicts from title and pictures
- Uses reading strategies, e.g. predicting,
- Uses phonic and contextual clues
- Identifies the plot
- Explains the message of story
- Describes the effect of an action or event

How would you differentiate the content for Mr Malele's reading and viewing lesson?

- What will they read?
- Will he use different / graded texts?
- Will the children be grouped in reading ability groups?

Differentiating the learning environment

A learning environment is a place or a setting where learning occurs. It does not refer only to a physical classroom but also includes the characteristics of the setting. Two key dimensions of the learning environment are the psychosocial and the physical. The learning environment in which our learners work can create barriers to learning. It is our responsibility as educators to make sure that we make the learning environment as conducive to learning as possible. Differentiation at this level is important.

The **psychosocial learning environment** covers psychological and social factors that have consequences for satisfaction, health, wellbeing and ability to perform effectively. This includes: interpersonal cooperation; classroom and school culture; protection against harassment and mental harm; effective communication.

The **physical environment** includes factors such as classroom spaces, classroom infrastructure, arrangement of furniture, level of noise, class size, classroom displays and resources. It is critical for educators to consider these factors when trying to meet the learning needs of all their learners.

How do we differentiate the learning environment?

We can do this by paying attention to the psychological, social and physical factors that shape the learning environment. The aim is to ensure that the learning environment is as conducive to learning as possible, encourages participation, and is as stimulating as possible for all learners.

Practical strategies:

- The educator requests learners to act as interpreters to translate the text into the mother tongue of learners who are not yet proficient in the first additional language.
- In a large class, a hearing impaired child or children who struggle to concentrate may experience barriers to learning because of noise levels and seating arrangements. This means that educators need to create a learning environment that ensures participation of all learners in learning.
- Collaborative learning helps to engage learners more confidently in class activities. Getting learners to work in small, mixed-ability groups allows lower achievers to benefit from peer support. The high achievers can help others to organise and plan the task and share their thoughts for the benefit of the whole group (peer modelling). In collaborative learning, roles are allocated within the group in ways that cater for each learner's skill level and learning needs.
- The educator can use activity-based lessons, games, simulations, role-plays to facilitate participation by all learners.

TASK 31: Differentiating the classroom: physical and emotional

- How would you arrange the classroom for Mr Malele's reading and viewing lesson?
- Will all the learners be comfortable and ready to learn?
- Are there any special placements that will assist a child or children so that they will be able to work better or with more ease?

A differentiated learning environment is flexible.

*Teachers and learners share an understanding that learning and teaching materials, methods of teaching, ways of grouping learners, ways of demonstrating learning, ways of assessing learning, time, and other classroom elements are just **tools to be used in a variety of ways** to enhance learning.*

Differentiating teaching methods

Educators are aware that children come to our classes with different abilities, skills and knowledge, learning styles, socio-economic backgrounds and personalities. In order to respond to their diverse needs we need to differentiate our teaching methods and strategies. The critical questions that we need to ask ourselves are:

How can we manage classrooms where learners are working at different levels of skills, knowledge and understanding?

How can we ensure that all learners are engaged in meaningful activities?

The key to differentiated teaching methods is the flexible use by educators of a wide range of: learning materials, methods of presentation, learning activities, lesson organisation.

Now let us look at practical ways in which we can differentiate our teaching methods.

Learning materials: We can make a range of graded materials available for learners – this provides scaffolding for learning.

- We can provide learners with a wide range of materials that cater for different abilities, interests and learning styles. Commercial and educator-developed materials, electronic learning or e-learning resources, and various types of media offer a range of options for differentiated instruction that must be tailored by the educator to meet learner needs.
- We can provide learners with a wide variety of authentic materials and texts to foster inquiry e.g. seashells, rocks, nests. This enables a broad range of learners to work side-by-side collaboratively.
- Art materials are valuable for a variety of learning styles.
- A variety of hands-on materials and open-ended tasks or activities can accommodate a diverse range of learners.
- We need to be aware that these materials might need to be adapted for learners with disabilities. For example, a child with poor vision might need larger print to be able to read easily. A child with an intellectual disability might benefit from the use of pictures in the learning materials.
- Graphic organisers (such as mind maps, webs, flow charts) are visual diagrams that facilitate meaning-making by representing abstract ideas and concepts in a concrete form.

What different materials may be needed to ensure maximum participation of all learners?

- Materials that allow a different mode of input.
- Same content but variation in size, number, format.
- Additional or different materials or devices.
- Materials that allow a different mode of output.
- Materials that reduce the level of abstraction of information.

Methods of presentation: We need to use a wide range of teaching methods or strategies to cater for the diverse needs of learners. We need to engage learners' interest by giving them the opportunity to participate in different types of activities such as projects, games, problem-solving activities, cooperative learning, project based approaches, problem based approaches (learners solve real problems), creative activities such as making a collage, etc. We can also modify the format in which the task is presented, e.g. the complexity of graphs, diagrams, tables, illustrations, cartoons, etc. A range of strategies can be followed to make these accessible to learners who experience barriers to learning of whatever nature, such as:

- Picture or diagram simplified or shown differently without compromising complexity of question
- Picture or diagram replaced by written description
- Picture or diagram supplemented by written explanation
- Picture or diagram replaced with a real item or model
- Unnecessary picture or diagram removed
- Amount of information reduced
- Inherently visual material replaced with equivalent non-visual material

Other methods could include:

Scaffolding: Learners with diverse learning needs usually have difficulty working independently and may require extensive initial guidance. Scaffolding refers to the personal guidance, assistance, and support that an educator, peer, or task provides to a learner.

Examples

Educators can convert independent writing activities to group activities so learners can support one another.

Educators can model and clearly define the expectations of the activity to be performed.

The educator requests the learners to share their own experiences, hunches, assumptions, and ideas about the content or concept they are learning. Then get them to relate and connect it to their own lives. The educator offers hints and suggestions, leading them to make connections.

Introduce new vocabulary to learners in the context of things they are interested in and have experienced. The educator can use analogies and metaphors to help learners make meaning. Learners can also create a symbol or drawing for each word. Time is given for discussion in small groups. Only at the end will learners use a dictionary to compare their constructed and discovered definitions to those in the dictionary.

Flexible grouping: Groups can be used for different purposes and educators should take care that a child does not get labelled as belonging only to one group. (Please note we do not seat learners in ability groups!) They will be in different groups according to the task at hand. Below are some groupings that can help where the content can be differentiated.

- *Enhanced / enriched learning* allows knowledge, concepts and skills to be attained on an advanced level. The knowledge concepts and specific skills of the specific grade are expanded.
- *Unmodified learning* concerns age / grade appropriate knowledge, concepts and skills. Here learning allows for the attainment of grade appropriate knowledge, concepts and skills;
- *Unwinding / scaffolding* learning involves knowledge, concepts and skills being grouped and structured. Learning support allows for scaffolding by breaking down the task into steps and going one step at a time.
- *Straddled learning* relates to learners working on the same thematic knowledge, concepts and skills, but at a lower grade / phase level. Learning can be attained on a lower grade / phase level.

Learning activities: Learning should be facilitated by planning teaching / learning activities that cater for the diverse learning needs in the classroom. Some points to bear in mind:

- Learning activities must be respectful of all the learners.
- Activities must be interesting, engaging and challenging for every learner in the class.
- Activities must be meaningful and engage learners' interest.
- Activities should link to real world contexts, issues and problems (authentic learning).
- Activities should constitute a good use of learners' time.
- Activities should provide learners with the means to move ahead in learning at a good pace for the learner.
- Activities should not be planned to just keep learners busy while the educator focuses on the advanced learners.

Let us look at some practical ideas and strategies.

The pacing of activities: In most classrooms, educators expect learners to complete activities within a set time frame, irrespective of the level of difficulty for some learners. What usually happens is:

- Advanced learners are held back to the speed of the average and less proficient learners,
- Certain learners just cannot keep up with the rest of the class.

When learning activities are differentiated, time is used flexibly to meet the needs of all learners. Learners who quickly grasp what is taught and complete activities should not be held back because their peers need more time to gain a solid understanding of a topic. These more advanced learners can be given an expanded task in which they apply what they have learnt.

Differentiating by outcome: This is a strategy in which all learners do the same task but a variety of outcomes is expected. So instead of one correct answer, educators allows learners to construct their own personal meanings or solutions, depending on their ability or proficiency levels.

Differentiating by dialogue and support: Here the focus is on the role of the educator and her knowledge of her learners. For example, the educator may mediate problem solving in the maths class by identifying which learners need more detailed explanations in simple language and which learners can engage in dialogue at a more sophisticated level. The kind of questions the educator uses is critical to produce a range of responses from learners, including challenging the more able learners. Affirming all learners and giving verbal support is critical to differentiating a learning activity.

Responding to learner interests or preferences for learning: For example, exploring a topic in Geography by getting some learners to draw maps; some visit a particular site to record a phenomenon; others conduct internet searches; others conduct live interviews with experts on topic.

Curriculum compacting: This is a content acceleration strategy that enables certain learners to skip sections of the curriculum they have already mastered and go on to more challenging and interesting content and activities. It is a three-step process:

The educator assesses the learner to find out her level of knowledge on the material to be studied and what she still needs to master.

The educator develops plans for what the learner needs to know, and excludes the learner from studying what she already knows.

The educator develops plans for the time that has now been freed up to be spent in enriched, expanded or accelerated study. (Renzulli & Reis, 2002)

Setting tiered assignments: This strategy provides varied levels of activities and assignments to ensure that learners explore and practice concepts at a level that builds on their prior knowledge and that prompts continued growth rather than repetition of prior knowledge. Tiered assignments make it possible for learners with different learning needs to engage with the same ideas and skills but at different levels of open-endedness, challenge level, complexity and abstractness.

Tiered Assignment (FET Phase)

Activity on advertising and propaganda

Level 1: Review the adverts in a magazine for teenagers. Analyse each by the propaganda technique used (e.g. persuasion, slogan, testimonial, imagery), and make a poster to illustrate

the techniques you have found. (Application)

Level 2: Review the adverts in a magazine. Analyse them to come up with what are the characteristics of an ideal teenager. Make a collage to depict and share your findings about how the adverts portray the ideal teenager. (Analysis / evaluation)

THE EDUCATOR VARIES

- **TASK** for different levels
- **PROCESS** for different levels
- **PRODUCT** to demonstrate learning

The organisation of lessons

The best way to meet learners' different learning needs is to organise lessons in a number of different ways. This means that we need to differentiate the manner in which activities are planned and organised in a lesson. This ensures the maximum involvement and participation of all learners in the lesson. Adaptations are made to the types of activities presented to the learners and this should be based on their readiness, developmental levels, learning styles, interests, backgrounds and learning profiles.

One of the ways of doing this is to think about multiple intelligences and recognise that we all learn in different ways. Howard Gardiner identified and labelled these as "intelligences". In planning lessons, the educator has to consider the range of activities related to the content of the lesson and the skills learners have to master. This will provide a range of opportunities in order to respond to learners' different strengths and learning styles.

Multiple intelligences

- Logical-mathematical: How can I include the use of numbers, classification, critical thinking and calculations?
- Spatial: How can I include pictures and diagrams, colours, art or graphs?
- Intrapersonal: How can I include private learning time and choice?
- Interpersonal: How can I include group work, peer sharing and discussions?
- Bodily-kinaesthetic: How can I include movement, practical apparatus, drama or art and craft?
- Musical: How can I include music, sounds, rhyme, rhythms and dance?
- Verbal-linguistic: How can I include reading, writing and speaking?

(Pritchard, 2009, p.35)

Another way to organise lessons is by **multi-level teaching**. I am sure we all agree that most educators teach multi-level classes in some form – these may be classes where learners have a range of proficiency or achievement levels, language competence, motivation and interest levels, and prior knowledge of a topic, concept or skill, etc. Learners may come from very different learning backgrounds and different and multiple levels of proficiency, and are at different stages of learning.

Multi-level teaching allows for continuous progress, and learners working at their own pace. The underlying thinking is that all learners can learn and be challenged.

Multi-level class educators

- Carefully observe what learners can do in order to plan for learning and teaching, and for moving them to the next level
- Structure a variety of learning tasks taking into account multiple intelligences, different interest levels, levels of prior knowledge, levels of proficiency
- Plan open-ended tasks that can provide a range of developmentally and culturally appropriate challenges for different groups of learners
- Allow for flexibility with regard to timelines
- Find appropriate teaching resources and material
- Organise flexible appropriate groupings within the class
- Ensure that all learners are challenged and no learner is left behind
- Learn to balance whole-group, small-group, and individual learning experiences
- Value learners' strengths, at whatever level they are functioning

Some examples of multi-level teaching

- The educator allows for answers at different levels of proficiency. Level 1 responses could be one to three words or yes/no responses; while level 3 responses could be whole sentences or open-ended questions posed by learners.
- Certain learners could be requested to complete a cooking assignment by following picture directions while others use written instructions.
- Focussing on skills other than language: Tasks and activities incorporating other abilities such as problem solving, using memory or general knowledge can motivate learners with lower language proficiency levels. Such activities enable these learners to participate by using strengths other than language. Using a game that has an element of chance ensures that everyone has an opportunity to win.

TASK 32: Differentiating teaching methods

- How would you teach Mr Manele's reading lesson?

- Would you incorporate peer teaching?
- What teaching methods/strategies would you use to deliver a successful lesson?
- How would the class interact with each other?
- How would you ensure all learners are actively involved in meaning making?

Differentiating assessment

Introduction

We are all aware that learners in any class are differentiated in their knowledge and skills, and they differ in the ways and in the speed at which they process new learning and connect it to prior knowledge and understanding. They also differ in the ways in which they can demonstrate their learning outcomes.

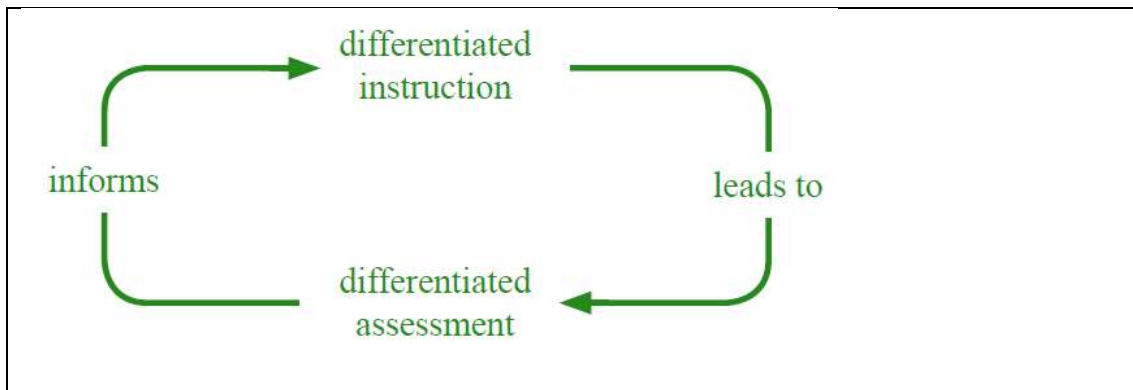
An educator who plans her teaching to be responsive to the differences amongst her learners selects sound assessment tools and methods that can provide her with information about learners' knowledge, understandings, learning strategies, prior experiences, abilities and competences, learning styles, motivational orientations, learning behaviours, interests, and attitudes to learning. Differentiated assessment is a new way of thinking about an assessment approach that is flexible enough to accommodate a range of learner needs. It is an ongoing process through which educators gather data before, during, and after instruction from multiple sources to identify learners' needs and strengths. Differentiating assessment involves rethinking the traditional practice of having all learners do the same assessment tasks at the same time, and in the same way.

Differentiated assessment will enable learners of various abilities and with varied experience to best demonstrate what they know.

How do we differentiate assessment?

As an educator gets to know her learners, and as learner differences emerge, assessment needs to become more differentiated. The goal is to meet learners where they are and to help them progress to the next step in their learning. Thus it is a cyclical process: assessment and instruction inform each other.

Differentiated Assessment Process (Department of Education, 2007)



Types of assessment

Recent research in education has highlighted three types of assessment:

Assessment for learning is planned so that the educator obtains information to decide on the starting point for learning, to modify and differentiate teaching to cater for diversity in the class group. This kind of assessment helps the educator to determine their prior knowledge, what learners know and whether they apply what they know; and about their interests and preferences. The educator uses this information to inform her teaching strategies and to advance learning.

Assessment as learning provides information on the role of the learner in learning – whether they are active, critical and engaged. Learners are given opportunity to monitor their own learning and use feedback from the educator and themselves to make adjustments and adaptations to their meaning making process and improve their understandings.

Assessment of learning is summative in nature. The information is used to confirm what learners know and if they have achieved learning outcomes.

All three types of assessment are valuable and help the educator to differentiate assessment. They provide information on:

- Where learners are in their learning
- Where learners need to advance to
- What the best way is to get them there

Differentiated assessment is supported by various South African education policies:

- National Policy Pertaining to the Programme And Promotion Requirements of the National Curriculum Statement: Grades R – 12 (Chapter 6. 33. Concessions; 34.

A National Senior Certificate With Endorsement For Learners With Special Needs).

- National Protocol for Assessment: Grades R – 12 (Chapter 9: Assessment of learners with special needs).
- National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act No. 27 Of 1996). Draft Amendment Policy Pertaining to the Conduct, Administration and Management of the National Senior Certificate. General Explanatory Note.

The above policies delineate that:

- The minimum requirements for achieving grades may not be compromised. However, within a flexible learner-based and learner-paced approach to the curriculum, all learners could be enabled to achieve their full potential irrespective of whether or not the end result will be a final certificate.
- There needs to be consistent representation of inclusive assessment practice across all grades. This needs to be dealt with in assessment, recording, reporting and promotion.
- Learners who experience barriers to learning in both ordinary and special schools need to be able to exit school with a recognition of competence.

Ways to differentiate assessment

Guiding questions educators can ask

- Which of my learners need more support in specific aspects of the curriculum?
- How do I collect evidence?
- How do I evaluate the evidence?
- How do I record the evidence?
- How do I use the evidence to design a support programme?
- What would be the most effective kinds of support for these learners?
- What assessment tools could I use to monitor these learners' progress?
- Does the assessment data I have gathered provide me with information on the kinds of adaptations / adjustments I could make in the type, intensity, and duration of support?

- What resources can I use both in and outside the classroom to support my learners who need additional support?
- How can I provide opportunities for different kinds of activities and different means of demonstrating learning?
- How do I provide a safe and supportive environment for learners to demonstrate learning?

Some strategies to differentiate assessment

- Allow the learner extra time to complete the assessment task.
- Use technology, aids or other special arrangements to undertake assessment tasks.
- Keep observation portfolios for certain learners who need additional support.
- Gather achievement / performance data through various assessment tools and techniques.
- Vary the form of assessment (e.g., printed text, visual or auditory representations; written tasks; oral responses). Visual representations of information enable learners to use both words and pictures to make connections and increase memory, facilitating retrieval of information. This “dual coding” helps educators address classroom diversity, preferences in learning style, and different ways of “knowing”.
- Use lists, charts, and graphic organisers: Learners can organise information, make connections, and note relationships through the use of various graphic organisers rather than merely by writing.
- Pace or scaffold the assessment tasks and activities.
- Assess learners by observing them, reviewing their work, using pre-assessment strategies to find out what they already know and can do, and having learners’ self-reflect and respond to questions and inventories.
- Encourage self-assessment: Learners gain skills to self-monitor, recognise their learning needs and answer questions such as these: What do I know? What do I want to know? Where am I now? Where am I going? How do I close the gap?
- Use peer assessment. Learners learn from their peers who generally speak a language they can easily understand.

- Allow for different styles or intelligences.
- Allow for oral and written assessment tasks.
- Give multiple-choice options.
- Allow questions requiring short answers for certain learners.
- Apply accommodations and concessions – Braille, extra time, reader, audio-visual equipment.
- Ensure that assessment tasks are authentic at most times, e.g. in literacy development, activities they do should resemble reading and writing in the real world.
- Adapt the learning outcome expected while using the same materials. For example, in geography one learner can locate just the provinces on a map, while others learn the main city or capital city in each province.
- Individualise the timeline for completing a task; pace learning differently for certain learners (increase or decrease).

Keeping a class profile

Keeping a class profile from the beginning of the year is very valuable as it enables educators to see patterns amongst their learners in terms of:

- Their current levels of functioning
- Their learning styles and preferences
- Their interests and talents
- Their learning strengths, gaps in their learning, and areas in need of improvement
- Their socio-emotional characteristics
- The challenges in meeting their needs
- Their social/cultural backgrounds

Alternate assessment for learners experiencing barriers to learning

The National Protocol on Assessment (Chapter 9) proposes THREE Alternate Assessment Strategies. Let us examine these.

Alternate Assessments Based on Alternate Attainment of Knowledge (content, concepts and skills) for learners with a significant cognitive disability. These assessments are based on the grade-level content covered by the general assessment, but at reduced depth, breadth, and complexity. These assessments

describe achievement based on what is determined as a high expectation for these learners. Target learners can include learners with intellectual disability who are currently enrolled in special and ordinary schools.

Alternate Assessment Based on Modified Attainment of Knowledge (content, concepts and skills) for learners with disabilities who are working on grade-level content that is covered in the general assessment. However, because of their disability they may require more time to master the content. These assessments measure a learner's mastery of the grade-level. Target learners can include learners with moderate intellectual disability, who are deaf, some learners on skills programmes, etc.

Alternate Assessments Based on Grade-level Attainment of Knowledge (content, concepts and skills) for learners with disabilities or learning difficulties who need testing formats or procedures that provide them with equal opportunities to demonstrate their attainment of content which is at the same grade-level as the general assessment. Target learners can include learners who are blind, have communication, physical disabilities, dyslexia, or hearing loss.

Important to note!

- All three types of assessment should, where possible, be available in ordinary and special schools
- Every learner should be assessed
- There should be high expectations of all learners
- Make sure that the learner understands from the outset what will be expected of him and what will be assessed
- Assess against the adapted content / text, seeing this as part of an ongoing process of supporting the learner to achieve the learning outcome
- In assessing, it must be acknowledged that doing part of the task has value.
- All learners should have the opportunity to receive a school leaving statement.
- Learners who experience significant barriers to learning must also have the possibility of straddling grades, which allows them to take certain subjects at grade level and others at a different level
- In terms of curriculum differentiation, where learner accessed the knowledge, concepts and skills on a lower level (straddling), the report card has to reflect on the levels on which knowledge has been gained and skills mastered.

Exemplars: range of options to demonstrate learning

Example 1

Learners can demonstrate their learning by writing, making, doing and saying; within these four modalities there are many possibilities for different kinds of expression and production. Think variety of options for learner products, projects and learning tasks.

Writing: point form, mind maps, outline, graphic organizer, sentence, paragraph, structured passage. Some learners in a class may choose to demonstrate their learning by writing a report, while others choose to create a poster, and still others choose an oral presentation.

Making: sketch, visual portrayal, model

Doing: performance, demonstration of skill, decision making, problem solving

Saying: discussing, debating, conferencing, skit, role-play.

Example 2:

An educator can use the idea of multiple intelligences as a framework for assessment so that her assessment tasks and strategies are responsive to learners' different learning styles.

- Discover and manipulate materials (bodily-kinaesthetic)
- Present an oral story illustrating new information in context (verbal-linguistic)
- Introduce new terms in a flow chart or mind map (logical-mathematical)
- Complete a piece of creative writing on a topic (verbal-linguistic)
- Turn to a peer and discuss (interpersonal)
- Draw a diagram to depict the information (visual)
- Write journal entries from a particular point of view (intrapersonal)
- Role-play a possible scenario (bodily-kinaesthetic)
- Write a children's book about the topic (verbal-linguistic)

The scenarios below show us how differentiated assessment can be done.

Scenario 1

Mark's ability to problem-solve in mathematics is quite strong. However, his ability to perform mental arithmetic is weak. After thinking about this and observing Mark, his teacher excluded the requirement to use mental arithmetic when assessing problem-solving. She allowed him to use a calculator. Mark was now better able to

demonstrate his good problem-solving skills.

Scenario 2

Mrs Dlamini found that in her class some learners knew the details or had the vocabulary but did not understand some key concepts in science. She also found that others had good general knowledge, but also had significant misconceptions.

Using her knowledge of Bloom's taxonomy, she decided to use a range of question types, from knowledge (which is true and false?); comprehension (what differences exist between ...?); recall (describe what happened?); application (do you know of another instance where...?); to analysis (what was the turning point in the game?); evaluation (judge the value of); synthesis (can you compose a song about...); and even speculation (what would have happened if...?); to allow a range of learners' understanding to emerge.

This would give her an indication of where they are and how to help them. Open-ended questions, such as "Write what you know about..." allowed more learners to respond in a variety of ways. She found that this approach helped her understand individual/group needs and plan her teaching to cater for the levels of understanding of all learner needs.

Summary:

The table below provides further insights on how the curriculum can be differentiated at various levels.

Curriculum differentiation at nine levels (adapted from Browning-Wright, 2005)

<p>QUANTITY</p> <p>Adapt the number of items that the learner is expected to learn or complete</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>Reduce the number of conceptual terms a learner must learn at any one time</p>	<p>TIME</p> <p>Adapt the time allotted and allowed for the learning, task completion, or testing</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>Individualise a time line for completing a task, pace learning differently (increase or decrease) for some learners.</p>	<p>LEVEL OF SUPPORT</p> <p>Increase the amount of personal assistance with a specific learner</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>Assign peer buddies, educator; group support</p>
<p>INPUT</p> <p>Adapt the way instruction is delivered to the learner</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>Use different visual aids; enlarge text; plan more concrete examples; provide hands on activities; place learners in cooperative groups</p>	<p>DIFFICULTY</p> <p>Adapt the skill level, problem type, or the rules on how the learner may approach the work</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>Allow the use of a calculator to figure maths problems; simplify task directions; change rules to accommodate learner needs</p>	<p>OUTPUT</p> <p>Adapt how the learner can respond to instruction</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>Instead of answering questions in writing, allow verbal response; use a communication book for some learners; allow learners to show knowledge with hands on materials</p>
<p>PARTICIPATION</p> <p>Adapt the extent to which a learner is actively involved in the task</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>In geography, have a learner hold the globe, while others point out locations</p>	<p>ALTERNATE GOALS</p> <p>Adapt the goals or outcome expectations while using the same materials</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>In map work, expect a learner to be able to locate just the province while others learn to locate capitals, main city as well</p>	<p>SUBSTITUTE CURRICULUM</p> <p>Provide different instruction and materials to meet a learner's individual goals</p> <p><i>For example:</i></p> <p>During a maths' test, one learner is practicing a particular skill through a computer maths game</p> <p>OR a group of learners are working on a functional maths programme</p>

Read the case study below to gain insight into a class of Grade 3 learners and their teacher. As with many of our classes, the group of learners is diverse in many respects. Ms Lazarus has planned a numeracy lesson for her class CAPS, and has tried to put into practice what she has learned from two workshops she attended on curriculum differentiation and differentiated assessment. This is still a challenge to her although she is a very committed teacher who wants to make her lessons responsive to diversity.

TASK 33: Responding to diversity through differentiated assessment

Read the case study and the lesson and evaluate Ms Lazarus's practices of curriculum differentiation and differentiated assessment. Consider:

- Her attitudes and values
- The principles underlying her practices of curriculum differentiation and differentiated assessment
- The points at which differentiation is taking place
- The strategies she is using to respond to the learning needs of all learners

Discuss the strengths and limitations of the lesson and reflect on suggestions you would make to her to enhance the lesson so that all learners are fully included.

Case study: Ms Lazarus

Ms Lazarus is a teacher in a grade 3 class at an urban school. She has 45 learners in the class who come from diverse backgrounds. Over the first term of the year, she has acquired an in-depth knowledge of her learners. She has become aware of the diversity amongst them in terms of language proficiency, reading and writing competence; interests, learning styles; learning behaviours; attitudes to learning; motivational levels; prior knowledge; levels of achievement in numeracy. In addition, she has one learner, Yandiswa, who is hearing impaired and wears a hearing aid. Yandiswa is doing very well academically with support – particularly emotional support – in fact, she is one of the high achievers in Numeracy.

Three learners were admitted to the school this year for the first time. Their parents moved them to the school as they believed that the quality of education was superior to the previous school. From her assessments, Ms Lazarus realises that the three learners are functioning below class level in numeracy. They have not mastered a lot

of the content and skills in the Grade 1 and 2 Numeracy curriculum. They are struggling with reading and writing skills in the Language of Teaching and Learning, English. Although they are working hard, they do present behaviour problems at times. They need to be closely supervised especially during group work or else they become playful and don't focus on the task at hand.

Ms Lazarus has four high achievers in her class who are highly motivated and have a special liking for, curiosity, and interest in numeracy. Ms Lazarus tries her best to stimulate them and provide them with a more enriching and expanded curriculum. Luyanda appears to have developmental delays and – speaking to his previous teachers – she learns that he has made progress but is below grade level in most subjects. In addition, she has Nicholas in her class. Nicholas is a pleasant child and tries hard when Ms Lazarus works with him one on one. He enjoys practical activities and working with manipulatives but is easily distractible. He has gaps in maths learning and has also not mastered some of content in the Grade 1 and Grade 2 curriculum.

Ms Lazarus has planned her next lesson (see below). The topic is fractions. She has spent time reflecting on how she will mediate the topic; plan learning activities and select her resource materials to cater for the diversity in the class.

DAILY LESSON PLAN		NUMERACY	GRADE 3
Theme: Our Environment Time: 1 hour 45 mins Topic: Fractions			
Integration: ???	Learning outcomes Learners will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order and compare common fractions e.g. half, quarter, third • Use the vocabulary of fractions: use the vocabulary for the fractions i.e. a half, a quarter, a third, • Illustrate how fractions represent part of a whole • Identify the whole in part-whole fractions Background to lesson Fractions (halves/thirds) have been introduced and illustrated by the learners with pictures, etc. Learners placed in groups based on their classroom performance. Educator to consider learners who are at different levels of competence – below class level, at class level, and exceed class level.		
	Learning and teaching Activities Warm-up Activity Educator will display a set of interlocking cubes for all learners to see. There should be several cubes of several different colours. Learners are asked to respond to the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What fraction of the cubes is red? • What fraction of the cubes is green? • What fraction of the cubes is yellow? Educator has learners respond on paper, and share responses.		

<p>Resources:</p> <p>Paper squares, paper circles, paper rectangles, paper triangles.</p> <p>Instructional Strategies:</p> <p>differentiation</p> <p>grouping/regrouping</p>	<p>Lesson development</p> <p>Group 1 (Below-level learners):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using paper circles (pizza) and squares (sandwich), learners in pairs determine how to share the food equally and illustrate by folding the paper. • Have two pairs determine how they can share equally with four people. They can cut the parts and stack them to see if they match. • Have the four learners repeat the process for sharing a pancake equally with three peers (let the circle represent the crumpet). • Each learner must explain in pictures or words how they shared equally. <p>Group 2: (Learners at class level):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using paper circles (pizza) and squares (sandwich), have learners in groups of three determine how to share the food equally and illustrate by folding the paper. • Have two groups of three determine how they can share equally with six people. • Have the group of six repeat the process for sharing a birthday cake with 12 people. In each case, they can cut the parts and stack to match. Have the group start with half a cake and divide equally for 3, 6 and 12 people. • Each learner must explain in pictures or words how they shared equally. <p>Group 3: (Learners who exceed class level):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using paper rectangles (sandwiches) and triangles (slices of pie), have learners in pairs determine how to share the food in three different ways to get two equal parts. Have them illustrate by folding the paper. • Educator gets group 3 learners to reflect on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Are there other different ways to divide each shape equally? – How many ways are there? • Have the pair determine which shapes (circles, squares, rectangles, triangles) are easier to divide evenly and illustrate why with a particular food of their choice. Each learner must explain in pictures or words how they shared equally.
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	<p>Assessment of Learning</p> <p>Oral and practical</p> <p>Informal assessment: observation and recording</p> <p>Assessment method: Educator</p> <p>Assessment tool: recording numeracy class books; checklist; observation sheet</p> <p>As the learners work, the educator will circulate among the groups and note the children's abilities to divide materials into equal parts and to reorganise and check for equal parts.</p> <p>She will consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can learners explain orally how many equal parts there are and demonstrate how they know the parts are equal? • Can learners explain in writing or pictures how they know that the parts are equal?
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In many cases, the curriculum support implemented by you will be effective and you will continue to routinely monitor and screen the learner's progress as part of your everyday teaching practice.

There will times however, when the support is not effective and the learner needs additional or different support. In Unit 7 we will work with the forms used by educators and SBSTs to apply for additional support.

Unit 7: Implementing SIAS at school level: SNA 1 and 2

Introduction

Although you were introduced to the SNA forms earlier in the workshop, you have not spent any time working with them. In this unit, we look at the forms completed at school level (SNA 1 and 2 including the Individual Support Plan [ISP]).

First you will look at the forms and their content and then you will get a chance to use them by working further on the Misha case study.

This unit uses the whole SIAS Policy document.

Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you should:

- Understand the purpose and content of SNA 1 and 2 forms (including ISP), who should complete them and how they should be completed
- Understand the content and purpose of supporting documentation, e.g. Form DBE126, and who should complete them
- Understand the various other instruments and sources that could be used to gain a better understanding of the strengths and needs of the learner
- Know how to work with SNA1 and 2 to implement the SIAS policy
- Identify your role in the process

Resources

You need:

- SIAS Policy and Forms: Learner Profile, SNA1 and 2, ISP, DBE126

SNA1

SNA1 is in the pack of documents at the back of the SIAS policy document. It is completed for an “at risk” learner or a learner needing additional support. Complete the following task to familiarise yourself with SNA1.

TASK 34: Introduction to the SNA1 form

Look at the SNA1 form and discuss the following questions:

- What is the purpose of this form?
- Who is it for?
- When should it be completed and by whom?
- What information does the form document? (What are the various sections?)
- Why are these sections important?
- Who is the form submitted to?
- When submitting this form, what related documents should be included and why?

Now that you know what the form is all about, it is time to practice using it with Misha's case study. Refer back to Misha's story and then complete this task.

TASK 35: Complete SNA 1 and develop a support strategy for Misha

The following was compiled by Mrs Guma, Misha's class teacher, at the beginning of Misha's Grade 3 year. It formed the basis of her SNA1.

BARRIERS

Learning

Home Language/LOLT: Persistent reading/phonics/listening difficulties seriously affecting performance:

- Misha does not have phonic knowledge at Grade 3 level. She is still struggling to pick up small differences in sounds between similar sounding words. She can't easily spot the odd word out in sound patterns.
- Doesn't seem to realise that the teacher is asking the class a question rather than giving information – she looks rather blank.
- Easily loses her place when reading aloud.
- Comprehension: she is seldom able to pick out the main idea from spoken information (even if it is only one or two sentences).

Other areas:

- Difficulties described above also evident across other areas of work
- Some problems when teacher poses "story-sums" orally in maths (her maths performance is strong otherwise)
- Short concentration span, easily distracted.

Behavioural and emotional

- Short attention span means that she sometimes distracts her partner in class, chatting (though very quietly).
- Although polite and pleasant in interviews, she looks anxious and withdraws noticeably when her difficulties are raised.
- Anxious and irritable when doing homework

Classroom/School capacity

I have pinpointed some difficulties but my extra reading programme for Misha has had little or no effect. I will continue to work on it, but if there is no positive change within the next month, I will need to consider more specialized assessment and possibly more specialized support than I can offer.

Overall: I feel that Misha may be experiencing some form of cognitive barrier because there seems to be some concentration and memory difficulties and issues of logical comprehension. However Misha's strong ability in mathematics must also be taken into account here."

ENABLING FACTORS

- Misha is cheerful and friendly with her peers during break times.
- On the whole she achieves very well in maths.
- Her parents are attentive and supportive and the home situation seems happy.
- Misha continues to be happy and co-operative at home, except when doing homework.

Now work with your facilitator. Use the information above to complete form SNA1 for Misha. The case study and barrier summary do not provide all the information you will need so use your imagination where necessary.



In many instances, the support planned and implemented by you, as discussed in the previous unit, will be effective and you will continue to routinely monitor and screen the learner's progress as part of your everyday teaching practice.

There will times however, when the support is not effective and the learner needs additional or different support. When this happens, and you have exhausted your options, you will turn to the SBST for help. This is when the SNA2 form becomes relevant. In the next section, we will look at SNA2.

SNA2 and the Individual Support Plan

SNA2 is completed when the support documented and given as part of SNA1 was not effective.

Complete the following task to familiarise yourself with SNA2.

TASK 36: Introduction to the SNA2 form (including Individual Support Plan)

Look at the SNA2 form and discuss the following questions:

1. What is the purpose of this form?
2. Who is it for?
3. When should it be completed and by whom?
4. What information does the form document? (What are the various sections?)
5. Why are these sections important?
6. When submitting this form, what related documents should be included and why?

The SNA2 form includes an Individual Support Plan (ISP), which is developed from information contained in the SNA1 and then SNA2 form.

Look at the ISP form and discuss the following questions:

1. What is the purpose of this form?
2. Who is it for?
3. When should it be completed and by whom?
4. What information does the form document? (What are the various sections?)
5. Why are these sections important?
6. When submitting this form, what related documents should be included and why?

In your Misha case study, your teacher has implemented and monitored her support package for one month, as planned, and found that the learner needs further support. The reading programme she put in place has not had any positive results. She turns to the SBST.

She takes her completed SNA1 and related documentation to the SBST meeting. You will now meet as an SBST to discuss the case. You will examine SNA1, review the action taken, decide on a further course of support action and complete SNA2 to document your findings and decisions.

Before you start working on this, your facilitators will introduce to you a quick and effective way to conduct a problem-solving case meeting. You will use this tool at your SBST meeting and work on your Misha case.

TASK 37: Conduct a 30-minute problem solving meeting and use SNA2

- The meeting will take 30 minutes.
- Appoint a facilitator.
- Allocate a different role to each remaining group member.
- Conduct the meeting like this:

Stage 1: The facilitator explains the problem and problem-solving process. (2 minutes)

Stage 2: The educator explains the problem she faces. The recorder takes notes in point form on a flipchart. (2 minutes)

Stage 3: All role-players ask the educator questions to clarify the situation. (3-5 minutes)

Stage 4: Brainstorm strategies to address the situation. (10 minutes) The recorder captures these ideas in point form on the flipchart.

Stage 5: Choose strategies. (5 minutes) The educator chooses strategies that **she thinks** will work and rates them 1, 2, or 3.

Rating scale	
1	Ideas that could work immediately
2	Good ideas that are not a priority
3	Ideas that have already been tried or are not practical in the situation

The selected ideas should be practical and do-able and helpful to the situation. The recorder notes the ratings next to each idea.

Stage 6: Develop an action plan. (3 minutes) Ensure that each person's roles are captured.

Stage 7: Close the meeting (3 minutes)

Reflecting on your meeting

- What interventions did you decide are necessary for Misha?
- Which key role-players should be involved?
- Which forms will you need to complete and who should complete them?

- Now fill in the relevant forms as a group, culminating in a completed Individual Support Plan, the final part of SNA2. You will not have all the information you will need so use your imagination where necessary.
- When you have completed your SNA2 with ISP, present it to the other groups for discussion.



Usually, the SBST will have the resources and skills available at their schools to be able to provide the required support to learners. However, there will be times when the SBST will need to access outside support. When this happens, the SBST needs to complete a DBE 120 form, requesting additional support and submit it to the DBST together with the completed SNA1, 2 and related documentation.

The DBST will meet to discuss the application and recommend a support package.

Well done! You have come to the end of the orientation workshop of the SIAS Policy.

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