Course Booklet

Topic: Inclusion and Special Education Needs

Fall 2023

Online/Virtual/Blended Sessions

Trainer: Dr. Sarah Benson

1) Instructor Information

Dr. Sarah Benson is an Associate Professor in inclusion and disabilities in the Department of Disability, Inclusion and Special Needs. She is the Head of Subject Group for Education and programme lead for the Inclusion and Special Education Needs PGCert and Masters' on the University of Birmingham's Dubai campus.

Dr. Benson has published articles and book chapters on inclusive policy in the Middle East. Her interests lie in not only inclusive policy, but new teacher development and creating opportunities for students with disabilities. She has also spent time writing and researching inclusive science curriculum for primary grade students.

Her current research interests lay in the Middle East and Gulf where she is inspired to see the rapid growth opportunities for more inclusive communities.

2) Course Overview

Description:
This is a 5 week course to support educators in becoming more inclusive in their practices. The goal is to support teachers, learning assistants and other education professionals in developing more competency when working with children of determination in the general education classroom.

Throughout the course participants will be engaged in developing practical skills alongside their knowledge and understanding of disability. While sessions will be held online, each session will require participants to be engaged in group discussion and interactive sessions.

In order to follow best practices of teaching online, each class will meet for 2 hours live teaching and participants will have a 1 hour independent task to engage with before or after the session on their own timetable.

Participants will study the following topics:

Workshop 1: Understanding disability
Workshop 2: Universal design for learning
Workshop 3: Communication and language differences
Workshop 4: Executive functioning differences
Workshop 5: Social, emotional and behavioral differences

Learning Objectives:
Participants will be able to:
- Make modifications to classroom environments to create more inclusive spaces for all students.
- Understand the basic principles of UDL and apply those to their lessons to engage and include all students.
- Identify strategies for modifying lessons and activities to support learners who have specific needs in communication and language; executive functioning; social, emotional and behavior areas.
- Increase their own confidence in working with students of determination in the classroom.

Agreements:
Participants agree to the following training etiquette:

KEEP ON SILENT   PARTICIPATE   REFLECT

BE PUNCTUAL   SHARE IDEAS   APPLY TODAY! TRANSFER TO YOUR CLASSROOM

Certificates:
Certificates will be awarded to participants who:
- Have 100% workshop attendance
- Complete all in-class tasks.
- Complete all homework tasks.
- Selected participants will be awarded at the end of the course for actively participating and sharing best practices.

3) Course Outline

Workshop 1: Understanding disability

Overview: Participants will become more familiar with disability and how it can impact students in the classroom. The focus will be on dispelling myths and stereotypes about disability while moving from deficit mind-sets and ways of speaking to capability-focused conversations.

Objectives:
Participants will
- …be able to identify common disabilities and potential barriers in their classrooms.
- …practice capability focused conversations.
- …identify and dispel myths about specific disabilities.

Guided Questions:

- What do I know about disabilities in the classroom?
- Can I define the following terms: deficit mindset; capability approach; barriers?
- How can what I say influence what I do and what impact does that have on students in my classroom?

Independent work:

Students will watch The Silent Child movie and through a group discussion answer a series of questions.

How was Libby different with her parents and with her sign language tutor?

What stereotypes did the parents hold about deaf individuals? How could you dispel those?

What barriers is the school putting in place that is impacting Libby's learning?

Workshop 2: Universal Design for Learning

Overview: Participants will be introduced to the concept of universal design for learning. During class and independent activities multiple and flexible means of presentation, expression and engagement will be modeled and practiced.

Objectives: Participants will…
- **…** know and understand the three principles of universal design for learning
- … construct learning experiences that provide multiple and flexible means of presentation, expression and engagement for school-aged students.
- **…**reflect on their own teaching practices and how they can shift to incorporating more principles of UDL.

Guided Questions:

- What is UDL and how does it support learning in the classroom?
- How can I practice UDL to engage all learners in my classroom?

Independent work:
- Students will complete the Iris Center module found here: https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/udl/ and provide a screen shot of each completed activity.

Workshop 3: Communication and language difficulties

Overview: This week you are learning about accommodations and supports that you can use in classrooms to help support students with disabilities. The focus will be supporting executive functioning, lessening communication barriers and how to create classroom environments that increase positive behaviors. All of the practices you will learn are considered evidence-based. This means they have been researched and shown successful results for students with disabilities.

Objectives: Participants will…
- …Be able to identify executive functioning, language and communication barriers in the classroom.
- …Identify resources for supporting students and teachers to create an inclusive classroom.
- ...Understand systems of positive behavior support.

Guided Questions:
- What universal supports for executive functioning, language and communication can be put in place to support learners?

- How do executive functioning, language and communication impairments impact individuals in a classroom?

Independent work:
- Students will use provided online resources to produce an 'encyclopedia' of ideas to share with colleagues when supporting students with communication and language difficulties.

Workshop 4: Specific Learning Disabilities

Overview: This week you will continue learning about accommodations and supports that you can use in classrooms to help support students with disabilities. The focus will be on lessening barriers to reading and math in general education classrooms. All of the practices you will learn are considered evidence-based. This means they have been researched and shown successful results for students with disabilities.

Objectives: Participants will…
- …Understand common barriers to accessing reading or math in the classroom.
- …Evaluate resources for supporting students and teachers to create an inclusive classroom.
- …Identify and use various assistive technologies that can support students.

Guided Questions:
- What are the common learning disabilities that require multiple and flexible means of working in a classroom?
- How do principles of UDL support learners with specific learning disabilities?
- Who is responsible for the learning outcomes of students with disabilities?

Independent learning: Participants will amend a lesson plan using provided evidence-based practices to create a more inclusive learning experience for students with specific learning disabilities.

Workshop 5: Emotional, social and behavior

Overview: This week the focus will be on how individual students experience emotional, social and well-being challenges. You will consider how external and internal factors can impact students emotional and social well-being.

Objectives: Participants will…
- …understand the impact of emotional, social and well-being challenges on behavior.
- …develop classroom routines and expectations to support learners experiencing emotional, social and well-being challenges.
- …identify positive supports for students to create a safe learning environment.

Guided Questions:
- How do other impairments impact students' emotional, social and well-being?
- What steps can educators take to increase positive behaviors by eliminating emotion, social and well-being stressors?
- How do academic barriers impact student behaviors?

Independent work:
Participants will explore how holistic models of care and support for students can increase positive behaviors and encourage emotional, social and well-being resiliency. Using research students will identify 3 ways they can change their schools to create more supportive learning environments for students with emotional, social and well-being challenges.

The End

P.S Please upload all activities, independent work, feedback and discussions on the RAKTN platform. We will also be communicating during our sessions on