

Building Equality into the Curriculum

Toolkit for learning providers

The curriculum should meet the needs of people with all of the protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010 and extend understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion to all learners.



Why equality, diversity and inclusion are important elements of curriculum planning, design and delivery



The curriculum should meet the needs of people with all of the protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010 and extend understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion to all learners.

By providing effective training for all staff as well as supporting them to develop ownership and their commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, this will enable them to develop systematic approaches to tackling poor behaviour, inappropriate language, attitudes, harassment, victimisation, discrimination and bullying.

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Why equality, diversity and inclusion are important

Insight helps to move the agenda forward

Often, our journey around equality, diversity and inclusion is a reaction to some kind of behaviour, inappropriate use of language or a number of complaints from staff or learners about inequalities taking place.

Our behaviour in relation to equality and diversity has been about the 'now'; we often fail to consider the impact that history, policies, procedures and legislation have made on this complex agenda.

What we really need to do as leaders, managers and staff is to develop our organisational infrastructure to create a culture of awareness, knowledge, skills, acceptance and understanding around the issues of equality, diversity and inclusion.

Inequality is a serious problem

Often, managers and staff are aware that in their organisation there are issues around homophobic sexist and racist language, behaviour and attitudes. In some areas of the organisation these types of behaviours are minimal, but in others they are rife and many learners have discriminatory attitudes. Intimidation and harassment of learners and staff are also issues which are well known but seldom tackled because of preconceived ideas that this is the way young people speak, behave or act.

The serious issue is that we are preparing young people for work and for a society in which they will live and earn. If we continue to excuse inappropriate language, behaviour and attitudes we are failing our learners and colluding with acts of discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying.

Putting things right

Doing the right thing

This toolkit looks at the issues expressed above and provides support for teachers to work in collaboration with managers to embed equality, diversity and inclusion into the curriculum. (Noting that the curriculum is not just what is taught but also the way the organisation operates, its functions both hidden and visible).

Each organisation has to develop an infrastructure to promote equality, tackle discrimination and to foster healthy relationships between different groups.

A significant part of the infrastructure is staff development, training and support for all teaching and non-teaching staff to ensure that everyone knows how to promote equality, tackle discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation, and effectively build good relationships between different groups. The end goal is to empower both staff and learners to challenge all forms of discrimination.

Extending the curriculum

A critical success factor for promoting equality, tackling discrimination of all types and fostering healthy relationships is to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion issues are embedded throughout the breadth of the curriculum.

This approach ensures that equality, diversity and inclusion are not bolted-on, one-off activities or 'sticking plasters' on serious problems. Inclusion and the eradication of prejudice have to be rooted within the organisation's systems, procedures, infrastructure and the curriculum.

Another critical success factor in addressing issues of inequality is the development of reporting structures. Racist, sexist, homophobic and other discriminatory behaviour should be reported, recorded and acted upon. A simple but highly effective action is to enhance the organisation's behaviour referral forms to include references to racist, sexist, homophobic and disability related language and behaviour. This would enable all staff to identify, record and report discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying as they arise.

The benefits

A significant outcome of leadership and management in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion within an organisation is that both staff and learners feel confident to be themselves. They feel valued as individuals; they are able to be honest about their sexuality without fear of reprisals or harassment; they are not stereotyped because of where they live, what they look like or how they speak or dress.

Building equality, diversity and inclusion into the curriculum has major benefits for learning providers. Overall, the organisation's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion will be much more cohesive and inclusive and issues of discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying will decrease significantly if not disappear.

Both staff and learners will gain better awareness and understanding of the importance of planning, designing and building equality, diversity and inclusion into the everyday curriculum and begin to change their attitudes, language and behaviour, whilst at the same time the organisation's culture will change to become more accepting and inclusive.

Critical success factors for building equality and diversity into the curriculum include:

- senior managers providing strong leadership in ensuring the organisation is inclusive
- named people/post holders that work to promote and embed effective equality, diversity and inclusion into learning strategies and manage discriminatory behaviour
- featuring the organisation's commitment to equality and diversity in its strategic priorities
- implementing and establishing mechanisms for developing an inclusive organisational culture that has an impact on learners and staff
- seeing equality and diversity not as a bolt on but as a foundation on which to build
- being proactive rather than reactive – you don't have to identify large-scale issues to react to before you advance equality and diversity within the organisation
- communicating to staff that equality, diversity and inclusion is a journey and not a destination – the journey towards being an outstanding organisation in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion practice is never-ending, but there is a need for a planned approach to achieve your goals
- establishing a comprehensive equality and diversity monitoring framework and acting swiftly when issues are identified

- establishing formal groups involving stakeholders to steer work related to specific protected characteristics and ensure involvement in key decisions
- investing in the key resource of named people or post holders with time and responsibility for equality, diversity and inclusion to support the promotion of equality and diversity in teaching and learning
- working in partnership with other agencies to effect seamless transition for learners with disabilities
- investing in comprehensive assistive technology to enable learners to fulfil their potential
- ensuring staff understand expectations in terms of equality, diversity and inclusive practice and how to access support and resources to ensure that they meet the required standards
- mandatory equality and diversity training which is tailored to be directly relevant to specific curriculum topics and assist teams to identify ways to apply the training in their own subject areas
- harnessing the talents and enthusiasm of learner and staff forums and groups to spread the message
- encouraging curriculum teams to review what is being taught and their course materials, texts, media and imagery to explore the range of ideas and issues that learners are being exposed to.

Teams need to ask questions, such as:

- Are these examples mostly taken from Western culture?
- Do resources reflect the cultural diversity of the society in which we live and work?
- Why have these particular resources been selected and what is the impact of using them on embedding equality and diversity into the curriculum?
- Does the use of these resources help learners understand the complex issues of equality and diversity in society, and within the subject area and employment sectors?

Steps to success

- Consult on and agree the organisation's vision for equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Gain commitment from managers, leaders and governors/board members to a plan of action for how the organisation's vision will be achieved.
- Plan for learner/staff engagement at different stages on their learning journey to ensure that staff and learners understand the organisation's expectations with regard to equality and diversity from the outset.
- Provide regular, formal opportunities to engage with stakeholder groups internally and externally to inform curriculum planning, design, delivery, practice and strategy.
- Decide what you want to measure and ensure that you have the resources to collect and analyse relevant data.
- Act on what the data tells you and tell stakeholders what you've done.

How this Toolkit can help

This Toolkit acts as a guidance document, an induction resource and a resource to support teams and managers to explore issues related to effective equality, diversity and inclusion practice within the everyday curriculum. For those organisations a little further on in their development, it acts as a refresher toolkit for staff working in a range of capacities for schools, colleges, work-based learning providers, voluntary and community sector organisations, public sector bodies and in the private sector.

It can be used to form the basis either of formal induction training or guided self study for new and existing staff, including temporary staff, volunteers and people on work placement. In addition, it can be used flexibly to support delivery of equality and diversity sessions for those working directly with learners, volunteers or staff.

It aims to:

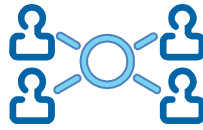
- remove any mystery and misconceptions and clearly explain the concepts of building equality, diversity and inclusion into the everyday curriculum
- suggest simple strategies for supporting equality and diversity in everyday situations that staff can put into practice straight away
- offer practical advice on dealing with promoting equality through the curriculum, tackling discrimination and fostering good learner relationships in an effective way
- demonstrate how embracing equality and diversity creates a better learning environment for everyone
- improve understanding and social awareness of why people behave differently, thus reducing unwitting and unintentional discriminatory behaviour in the learning environment
- reflect the reality of multiple discrimination, since everyone is affected by each of the characteristics that are protected by legislation, and areas not protected by law.

The information in the toolkit includes practical tips and checklists to aid planning and delivery and is supplemented by a range of activities to help you assess your performance, test your understanding and apply your learning to your own situation and learning environment. Many of the tips, checklists and activities will kick start the preliminary thinking, planning and information gathering processes you will need to embed equality and diversity into your area of work.

The following icons help to guide you around the Toolkit.



Signposts you to another Module of the Toolkit where you can find out more on the topic



Indicates or signposts you to an activity for learners or to help you assess or improve performance or plan for inclusive learning



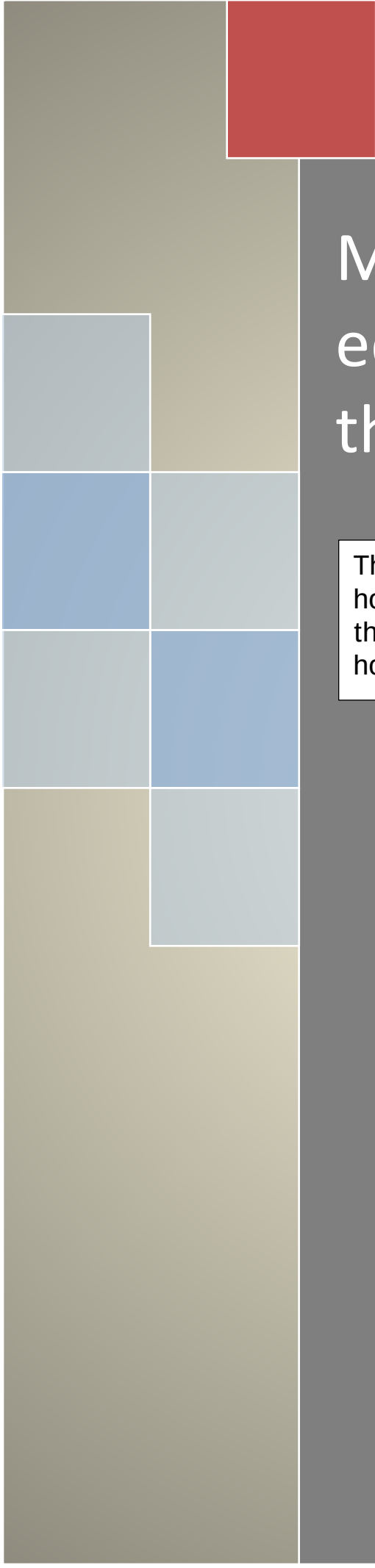
Indicates a practical tip to help you improve your planning or delivery of inclusive learning



Signposts you to a different area of the current Module where you can find out more on the topic



Indicates a checklist of actions to help you improve your planning or delivery of inclusive learning



Module 1: Threading equality and diversity through the curriculum

This Module looks at the external factors that influence how we prioritise equality, diversity and inclusion in the curriculum and offers good practice checklists on how the organisation as a whole can respond.

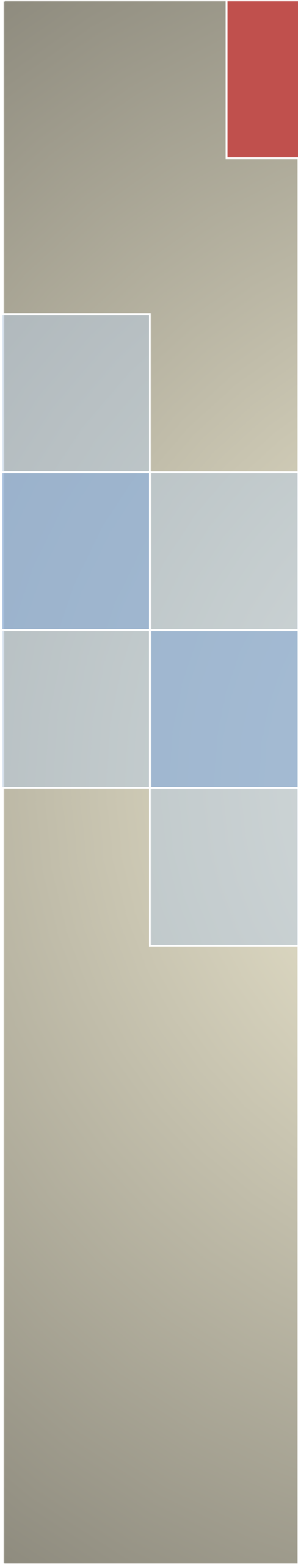


1 Threading equality and diversity through the curriculum



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1	Threading equality and diversity through the curriculum	
	Why is equality and diversity so important	2
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Module 2: Top tips for meeting inspection and legal requirements

This Module aims to give practical support to practitioners in embedding equality and diversity in the development, design and delivery of the curriculum. There are 10 top tips which draw on the latest information, advice and guidance from Ofsted, Local Authorities, as well as new on line resources, from the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

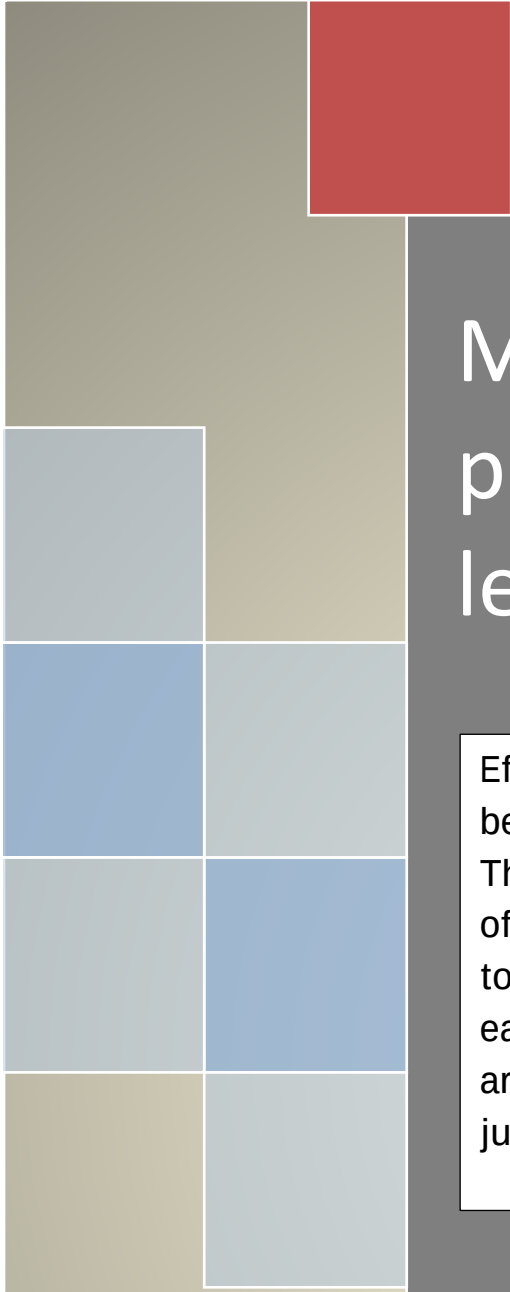


2 Top tips for meeting inspection and legal requirements



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Module 3: Top tips for planning teaching and learning

Effective and inclusive learning experiences can only be achieved by sufficient planning and preparation. This Module will enable you understand the principles of effective planning and how they can empower you to provide positive and inclusive learning experiences each time you deliver. The following sections are all areas that observers are looking for in making a judgement of good teaching and learning.



3 Top tips for planning teaching and learning



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Remember good planning will always underpin good teaching and learning.

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Module 4: Top tips for delivering teaching and learning

Although planning is important, effective and inclusive learning experiences can only be achieved if you have the knowledge and skills to behave and respond flexibly and inclusively to a range of situations and challenges as they occur. This section will help you to hone your knowledge and skills so that these responses become a natural and instinctive part of your delivery.



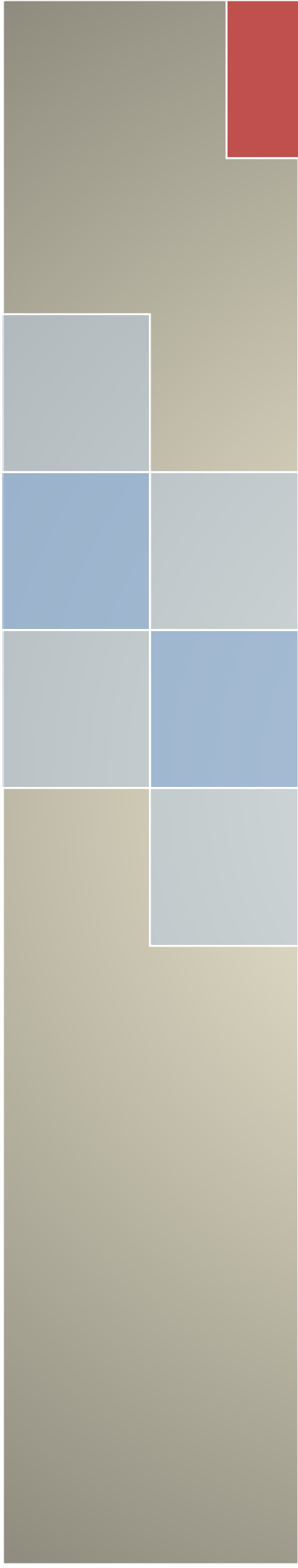
4 Top tips for delivering teaching and learning



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Module 5: Top tips for creating accessible learning materials and environments

Although you can never plan for every eventuality that may arise in your lessons, and sometimes you will have no choice but to think on your feet and 'wing it', you do at least have control over the learning materials you choose to use and to some extent the physical environment you operate in. There are many things you can do to make these easy to use, appropriate for and inclusive of all learners.



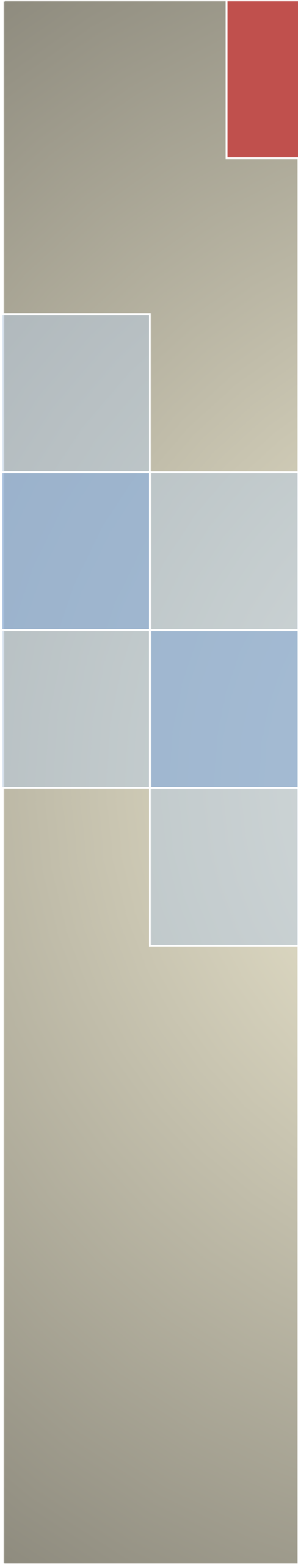
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Module 6: Good practice in building equality and diversity into subject areas

This Module suggests possible themes within different subject areas which lend themselves to exploring and raising awareness of equality and diversity issues. It is by no means an exhaustive list, as there are endless possibilities for exploring equality and diversity across subject disciplines, but is intended to get you started. The ideas can be developed in formal or informal contexts with learners across the age spectrum.



6 Good practice in building equality and diversity into subject areas

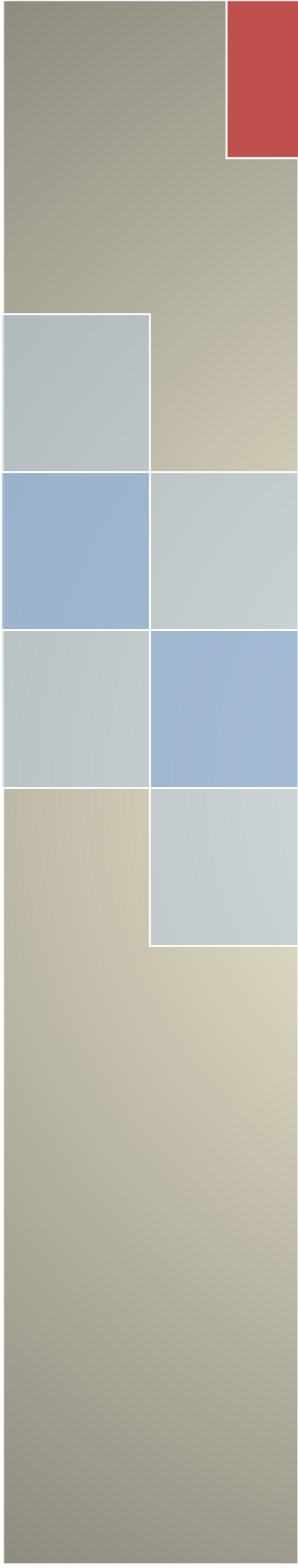


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Module 7: Providing evidence of your good practice

This Module explains the types of evidence that observers are looking for in making a judgement about the quality of teaching and learning.



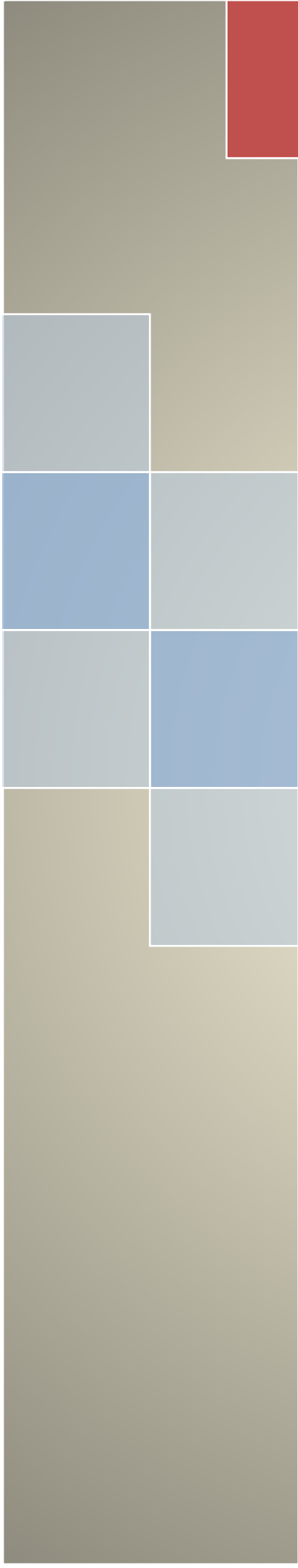
7 Providing evidence of your good practice



This Module explains the types of evidence that observers are looking for in making a judgement about the quality of teaching and learning.

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Module 8: Practitioner's Toolkit

This Module contains a range of checklists and activities that you can use and adapt for auditing your performance and personal development.



8 Practitioner's toolkit



This Module contains a range of checklists and activities that you can use and adapt for auditing your performance and personal development.

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