Differentiated teaching and learning: crucial for successful transitions?

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Workshop structure:

- Introduction
- Group work 1: Defining the issues
- Summarising the discussion 1
- Group work 2: Case studies
- Summarising the discussion 2
Q1: is the population of your students becoming more diverse?

- **profile**: age, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background
- **agenda**: expectations, demands, independence, deference
- **attitude**: motivation, aspiration, career trajectory
- **aptitude**: academic ability/capability

New students welcome, Oct 1963  
Lecture, 2014
Q2: do all your students learn in the same way, all the time?
Q3: are some of your students smarter than you?

○ is that a problem?
Q4: do some of your students have disability provisions?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>copies of notes/handouts/slides in advance</td>
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<td>05</td>
<td>extra 15 minutes per hour in exams</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>use of computer</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>no penalty for poor spelling/grammar where meaning is clear</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>permission to audio-record lectures</td>
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Support for Disabled Students

Positive about disabled students
The University of Aberdeen welcomes disabled students and is committed to improving access to its courses, facilities, buildings and social life.

The role of the Disability Adviser is to work with all areas of the University Community to ensure that students have an equal opportunity to enjoy the full benefit of their University experience. Our work encompasses disability in the broadest sense and includes making arrangements for students who require support as a result of injury or illness.

- Information for disabled students
- Disability information for staff
- The student experience
- Accessibility of the University
- Student Support Services
- Single Equality Scheme
Q5: is your teaching & learning environment changing?

- pedagogy
- delivery
- technology
Q6: do all students achieve the same outcomes?
Q7: at a given stage, are all your students thinking in the same way?
Q8: do all your students see problems in the same way?
Q9 is there a case for differentiated teaching and/or assessment in your courses/programmes?

- individualised/customised teaching
  - what are the challenges?
  - what are the opportunities?
Discussion 1: what are the issues?

• for your students?
• for your teaching?
• for transition?

Student diversity

No need to discuss solutions yet!
Student diversity

Discussion 2: what are the solutions?

- ‘Case Studies’
  - current
  - future
Possible ideas for responding to academic diversity

- **Flexibility in teaching and assessment**
  be ready to adjust delivery and assessment

- **Open-ended, problem-solving tasks**

- **Diagnostic testing**
  to see where strengths and weaknesses are, and to respond at class/individual level

- **Peer-mentoring**
  Pairing ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ students can be a win for both

- **Choice of assessment tasks**

- **Differentiated (and flagged) teaching material**
  For example, students can progress through tasks of increasing difficulty (e.g. tabs left to right below)

- **Adaptive assessment** (see next slide)
Possible ideas for responding to academic diversity

Adaptive assessment

In trials, it has been shown that most students are shifted between questions of different difficult levels during the assessment.

For more details: contact Martin Barker m.barker@abdn.ac.uk