

WEA Approach to Education and Learning

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Background

The WEA is committed to adult education for social purpose and to achieve social justice. This commitment is well known and rightly cherished both within the Association and by our partners and funders across communities, local authorities and employers. However, it is important to set out clearly what this commitment means in practice and how we as an organisation see this commitment translated into teaching practice in WEA classrooms.

This will help tutors, students and education staff and it will inform tutor development. It will also help the WEA deliver our objectives in a climate in which funding is increasingly moving towards an outcome based approach.

The WEA organises its education provision and identifies its impact across four key themes. They are Culture, Health and Wellbeing, Community Engagement and Employability. The themes are equally important and represent some of the most fundamental needs of people living in Britain's diverse communities. Each theme provides a context within which the WEA offers its wide and varied curriculum. Over time it is anticipated that most tutors who teach a subject regularly will have taught their subject using each of the four themes.

Principles

There are four aspects to our approach. These will be supported through a new tutor development programme, tutor communities of practice and through development of core resources.

WEA expects that in all our classes the following principles are followed:

- ▶ The course subject is explored in line with learning outcomes and developed in the context of WEA themes. One or more of the themes are reflected in planning and teaching of courses
- ▶ Life skills, including maths, English and digital, are developed and encouraged in the context of the subject area
- ▶ Students are encouraged to engage critically and actively around their study
- ▶ Equality, diversity, inclusion and safety are embedded in everything we do

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<p>Principles</p>	<p>Examples of classroom practice and planning which supports the WEA's commitment to outstanding teaching and learning:</p>
<p>Planning, assessment and feedback which implements our Approach to education and learning and which enthuses, challenges and engages students and enables them to make real progress towards their learning goals.</p>	
<p>Course subject explored in line with learning outcomes and developed in the context of WEA themes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Craft course Tutor encourages discussion about personal stories – for example: reflection on a period of history linked to a relevant craft activity - link to Culture and Health and Wellbeing ▶ ESOL Tutors explore vocabulary around setting up a micro business and practice conversations Employability ▶ Any subject: consider how the subject matter can or could relate to where and how students live and develop a discussion or practical topic around this. Community Engagement <p>Impact on students: Students are inspired to share personal or family experiences or artefacts in the classroom and will help shape the learning of others. Students will develop in new directions and be challenged and supported to progress.</p>
<p>Life skills, including maths, English and digital, are developed and encouraged in the context of the subject area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Environment Encourage tips on how share creative ideas on social media ▶ Preparing to Help in a School Devise a Year 4 maths quiz ▶ Practical Art Encourage everyone to talk about their work to the rest of the group and give constructive feedback to build students' confidence and communications skills. Key quality objectives: Feedback and assessment <p>Impact on students: Students gain confidence in speaking through formative and summative feedback on their presentation and are provided with tips and signposting to writing blogs.</p>
<p>Students are encouraged to engage critically and actively around their study</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Walk through History Students are actively encouraged to view You Tube clips before each session, research a new area on the walk and present their findings. ▶ Introduction to childcare Students are encouraged to draw up a petition to save local children's centres. ▶ Any subject Opportunities to develop research skills are built into planning, starting with in session activities which reflect the different skills and confidence levels of students Key quality objective: differentiation <p>Impact on students: Students are encouraged and confident to ask questions and seek out answers using a variety of methods including on line. Tutors model this in their own practice and use a variety of questioning techniques.</p>
<p>Equality, diversity, inclusion and safety is embedded in everything we do</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Any community class Students share food or recipes from their cultural tradition and bring in recipes for all to share. ▶ History Embed into planning a range of perspectives from different communities ▶ Maths Encourage students to reflect on the practical ways the skills they are developing can be of use to them in their lives and about possible next steps for them after this class. Key quality objective: progression <p>Impact on students: Students' diversity is valued and built upon to inform the tutor's planning in a range of practical ways, and opportunities are taken to encourage debate about common values, beliefs, and prejudices.</p>
<p>Support for tutors</p>	<p>There are a range of resources available on WEAVE to support these approaches. Look out also for Zoom training and webinars and make use of the Do it Differently campaign resources wea.org.uk/tutors/induction-learning-and-development</p>