Unit 36: Teaching a Specialist Subject

Unit code: K/500/9925
QCF level: 4
Credit value: 15

Aim
This unit aims to enable learners to develop the knowledge and understanding required when teaching a specialist subject.

Unit abstract
This unit gives learners the opportunity to identify the techniques and approaches to teaching and learning that are relevant to a specialist area. Exploring the range of philosophical approaches to teaching and learning will demonstrate the importance of adapting approaches when planning learning, in order to achieve specific learning objectives for a specialist area.

Learners will explore the specific range of delivery techniques and resources suited to a particular specialist area, identifying good practice and using this in the design and planning of learning objectives. The unit also highlights the importance of adopting an inclusive approach through selecting methods that meet learner needs to engage them in the learning activities, with the use of appropriate specialist resources.

The unit focuses on current curriculum requirements and the need for updating in the specialist subject area, including opportunities to incorporate new and emerging technologies and review their importance in relation to meeting individual and subject needs.

Learning outcomes
On successful completion of this unit a learner will:

1. Understand the aims and philosophy of education and training in own specialist area
2. Understand the aims and structure of a range of courses and qualifications available in own specialist area
3. Understand principles of inclusive learning and teaching and key curriculum issues in own specialist area
4. Understand how to use a range of specialist resources for inclusive learning and teaching
5. Understand and demonstrate how to work with other teachers and trainers within own specialist area
6. Understand how to evaluate, improve and update own specialist knowledge and skills.
Unit content

1 Understand the aims and philosophy of education and training in own specialist area

Aims: accessing subject-specific, up-to-date information from appropriate professional and vocational bodies; recognising the needs of current professional and/or vocational standards; current local/national legislation; major changes in standards relating to specialist subject or area; rights and responsibilities of specialist area; policies and procedures such as awarding body; issues associated with specific learner requirements

Philosophical issues: researching background of specialist area to establish underlying philosophical principles and how these inform associated professional standards and practice; professional values and visions and how these inform teaching and learning in the specialist area; approaches to teaching specialist knowledge to suit content eg encouraging independent research, didactic or pedagogic approaches for delivery; approaches to encourage learners to practise skills eg experiential, kinaesthetic principles, practice; opportunities to engage learners in developing reasoning eg debate, discussion

2 Understand the aims and structure of a range of courses and qualifications available in own specialist area

Structure: explore organisational policies and provision eg equal opportunity and access to courses, association with vocational and awarding bodies; organisational provision and marketing of courses in specialist area eg prospectus and course handbooks; awarding body regulations and specifications/standards eg National Occupational Standards, National Vocational Qualifications, unit assessment, curriculum requirements; scheme of work, syllabus, linking to assessment strategy and content requirements; learning outcomes and assessment criteria requirements; unitary, modular or holistic approach

Planning and preparation: programme planning; team working; establishing learner needs in terms of specific achievement goals; planning varied approaches to engage learners in achieving specialist goals eg teacher-centred and learner-centred teaching and learning, blended learning, bite-size chunks; clear and appropriate subject/specialist specific aims and objectives, suitable range of approaches and activities to ensure variety and engagement of learners, use of specialist resources and assessment activities to suit the subject specialism and the needs of learners

3 Understand principles of inclusive learning and teaching and key curriculum issues in own specialist area

Inclusive approach: design programme to ensure equality of opportunity in specialist area eg all learners can access learning at appropriate level; specialist language accessible to learners; group and individual activities to engage all learners eg subject/area specialism reflected through collaborative working and/or team teaching, demonstration, role play, games, discussion, visits, distance learning, online learning, research, experimentation, work-based and workshop-based learning where appropriate, supported or independent study, appropriate level of challenge
Approaches to include key curriculum: awareness of new approaches to teaching and learning; incorporating different learner needs and styles; variety of specialist methods to engage and motivate learners – addressing their needs; incorporating specialist learning activities; use of subject specialists for specific delivery and opportunities to incorporate a realistic, specialist learning environment eg visits, simulations; preparing for employment through incorporating the relevance of the specialist area and teaching; appropriate use of new specialist technologies eg materials developed for interactive whiteboards, PowerPoint, internet/intranet, VLE (virtual learning environment eg Moodle); flexible/blended learning approaches to encourage learner responsibility and interest

4 Understand how to use a range of specialist resources for inclusive learning and teaching

Range of resources: range of appropriate specialist resources eg handout design, format to meet the needs of a wide range of learners, case studies, notes, summaries, specialist materials – videos, textbooks, artefacts, models, exemplar materials, adaptation of existing and commercial packages to meet learner needs, new and emerging technologies – audio and visual aids, personal computers and range of software packages, CD ROM, specialist internet/intranet, adapting and developing specialist areas of virtual learning environment (VLE), specialist materials developed for activeboard/interactive board; encouraging development of subject-specific areas in learning centres

Inclusiveness in resource design: adopting a range of specialist teaching and learning resources; awareness of group and individual needs; emphasis on the use of resources so learners can be actively involved – encouraging interaction eg through simulation; avoidance of over-use of technology to avoid learners tuning out and becoming bored; variation of resources, handouts, ‘the Real Thing’, internet and intranet for learner and teacher research, for subject/specialist area updating to increase flexibility of approach, access to teacher-devised specialist learning packages to meet learner needs, subject/specialist learning networks

5 Understand and demonstrate how to work with other teachers and trainers within own specialist area

Opportunities for liaison: core team meetings; individual research and sharing experiences and good practice; team building; cross curriculum teams for sharing wider skills and experiences; use of staff development and in service training (INSET); incorporation of opportunities for engagement with external agencies – vocational and professional specialists, awarding body subject specialist meetings/networking and updating/specialist training; work shadowing/placement; emailing and online sharing of experience, mailshots, awarding body online updating, maintaining network contacts; establishing and maintaining good relations with external verifier/examiner as way of keeping up with changes in specialist area/awarding body standards

Impact of liaison: sharing good practice eg team meetings for the purpose of cascading/dissemination of information reflecting subject/area updating, develop alternative strategies for teaching and learning appropriate to the specialist area and learner needs, collaboration in design of programme incorporating different skills and experiences, sharing practice in design and evaluation of resources, value and respect for experienced team members, incorporation of skills, knowledge and experiences from workplace/industry, linking community needs to specialist area
6 **Understand how to evaluate, improve and update own specialist knowledge and skills**

*Strengths and development needs:* evaluation of specialist personal skills required for teaching and learning in specific programme/syllabus or curriculum area, formal and informal processes for personal evaluation of subject/area specific curriculum to meet learner needs for inclusion; using reflective practice in evaluating own approaches to teaching knowledge, skills and understanding; using feedback from others in evaluating personal skills and attributes in relation to planning a specific subject/area teaching and learning programme eg learners, peers, line manager, team, observations; recording of positives and negatives in own practice in specialist area for actioning; responsiveness to learners and colleagues

*Developing and updating specialist knowledge/skills:* plan/take up opportunities to improve own specialist practice eg Personal Development Journal/Reflective Journal to plan for own learning opportunities; individual research into current specialist curriculum developments and updating own specialist knowledge, skills and understanding; specialist staff development opportunities; identifying opportunities for INSET provision with appropriate bodies; specialist higher level qualifications eg higher degrees/Masters/PhD; professional – specific academic or professional practice; specialist vocational updating; secondment, work shadowing or work placement
## Learning outcomes and assessment criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment criteria for pass</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>On successful completion of this unit a learner will:</strong></td>
<td><strong>The learner can:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| LO1 Understand the aims and philosophy of education and training in own specialist area | 1.1 review key aims of education and training in own specialist area  
1.2 discuss key philosophical issues relating to education and training in own specialist area |
| LO2 Understand the aims and structure of a range of courses and qualifications available to learners in own specialist area | 2.1 summarise the aims and structure of a range of key courses and qualifications in own specialist area.  
2.2 justify how own approach to the planning and preparation of a particular course or qualification in own specialist area enables identified aims to be met |
| LO3 Understand principles of inclusive learning and teaching and key curriculum issues in own specialist area | 3.1 discuss the inclusiveness of own approach to the planning and preparation of a particular course or qualification in own specialist area  
3.2 justify how own approach to the planning and preparation of a particular course or qualification in own specialist area takes account of key curriculum issues, including the role of new and emerging technologies |
| LO4 Understand how to use a range of specialist resources for inclusive learning and teaching | 4.1 review a range of learning and teaching resources, including new and emerging technologies, discussing their effectiveness in meeting individual learning needs  
4.2 explain and justify the inclusiveness of own use of a range of resources |
| LO5 Understand and demonstrate how to work with other teachers and trainers within own specialist area | 4.1 review a range of opportunities to liaise with other teachers and trainers within own specialist area.  
4.2 review the impact of liaising with other teachers and trainers within own specialist area on own practice |
| LO6 Understand how to evaluate, improve and update own specialist knowledge and skills | 4.1 review own approaches, strengths and development needs in relation to own specialist knowledge and skills  
4.2 discuss how to develop and update own specialist knowledge and skills |
UNIT 36: TEACHING A SPECIALIST SUBJECT

Guidance

Links

This unit links with other units in the programme such as Unit 11: Animal Behaviour, Unit 25: Manage Animals in Education and Entertainment and Unit 26: Manage the Training of Animals.

Essential requirements

Learners need access to specialist tutors who understand the techniques and resources best suited to specialist delivery, which in this case is likely to be riding and/or stable management instruction. Opportunities for discussions with more experienced colleagues, and access to specialist tutors, will provide an essential source of support and guidance. It is important that a number of teaching practice observations are conducted by a subject specialist, aware of the specific skills, knowledge and understanding appropriate to the specialism.

Access to up-to-date specialist background knowledge and information is essential to support learners in planning and developing specialist teaching techniques and advanced learning activities appropriate to the specific learning outcomes and different learner needs. It is also essential that learners have access to background reading material to cover the philosophical principles and models that can be related to the specialist area.

Multimedia computers, specialist software packages, normal photocopying facilities and other reprographic arrangements need to be available, together with access to ICT and presentational equipment (preferably including video and PowerPoint).

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Developing relationships with employers through work-related experience will give learners opportunities to undertake teaching practice for example in riding schools and training centres. It would also be beneficial to develop links with relevant awarding bodies, for example the British Horse Society, to ensure up-to-date information is available on the range of qualifications available.

It would be valuable for learners to observe teaching and coaching sessions delivered by qualified teachers/instructors in a range of different settings.

Guest speakers with expertise in using specialist resources such as a VLE would enhance delivery.