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Chester University Keynote 2026

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Some slides by Lucy Sors, Inclusion Lead YSJ ITE



When Compassion Is Not Enough: Rethinking Inclusion as Pedagogy in Higher Education

Dr Katy Bloom

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York St John University

Universities see themselves as inclusive

Most universities believe they are inclusive because they:

- comply with the Equality Act
- fund disability services
- Have an inclusion policy
- Offer EDI CPD
- Have a culture of 'care'

Compassion *feels* sufficient?

Familiar HE practices:

- Extensions on request
- Individual learning plans that sit outside curriculum design
- Reasonable adjustments/retrofitting adjustments *after* students struggle
- ‘we did what we can’

Which students in your programmes succeed because they adapt to us—rather than because we adapt to them?

Compassion without pedagogical change
is not inclusion—it is containment.

But exclusion persists

Rising disability disclosure

Persistent attainment gaps

Equality Law tends to be reactive

- responds to declared need
- centres reasonable adjustment

What SEND offers HE is not categorisation—but a disciplined way of noticing barriers before students fail.

Equality Act = reactive legal duty

SEND CoP = anticipatory pedagogical logic

HE largely operates on the former and ignores the latter



Department
for Education



Department
of Health

Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years

Statutory guidance for organisations
which work with and support children
and young people who have special
educational needs or disabilities

January 2015

SEND CoP 0-25 (2015)

- HEIs follow the 2010 Equality Act
- Schools follow this, but practice is governed by the SEND CoP (2015) which considers educational need arising from a variety of sources.
- For HEIs **not** to consider this is an oversight.

Why HE keeps discovering the same problem

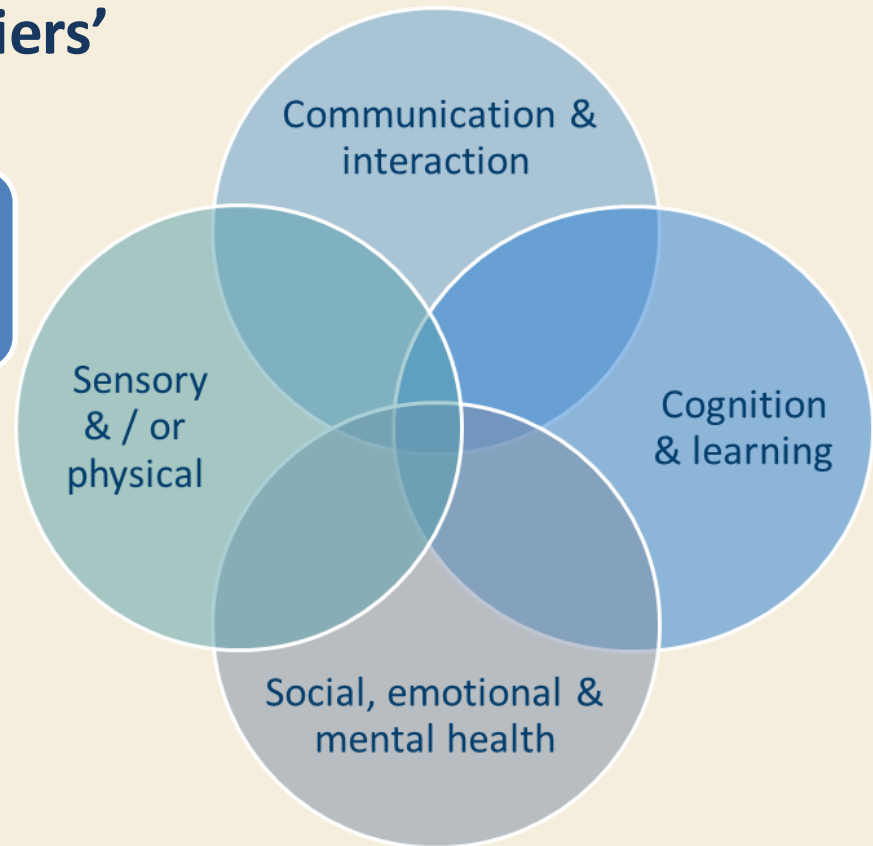
Inclusion through SEND lens: 40+ years of professional thinking about:

- barriers
- overlapping needs
- anticipatory practice
- high-expectation inclusion.

Critical reflection on the '4 Broad Areas of Need' (SEND CoP 0-25, 2015) reconceptualised as '**barriers**'

How can this focus help us to identify and remove barriers?

- 'Areas' overlap
- Focus on well-being
- Modes of support will depend on students
- High quality practice is anticipatory and based on understanding of specific barriers
- High quality, universal inclusive teaching to meet all students' needs is the foundation to practice
- Good practice for SEND is good practice for all



The medical → social → critical shift

Adaptive = responsive in real time, not standardised or individualised after failure

Critical = attentive to power, norms, and disciplinary cultures

Pedagogy = curriculum design, not pastoral repair

The medical model

Core assumption

The problem resides in the individual.

Disability, difficulty or difference is a deficit

Pedagogy is unchanged

Expertise is diagnostic and corrective

Freirean parallel:

the “banking model” of education, where:

knowledge is deposited,
learners are passive,

failure is individualised.

The social model

Core assumption

The problem resides in the environment.

Barriers are designed into systems

Access is about removal or adjustment

Responsibility shifts from student to institution

Freirean parallel:

This resonates with Freire's insistence that:

- oppression is structural,
- exclusion is produced, not accidental,
- education is never neutral.

Critical model

Core assumption

The problem resides in power, norms, and epistemology.

- Whose ways of thinking count as “rigorous”?
- Whose participation styles are rewarded?
- Which learners are expected to adapt — and which are designed for?

Freirean parallel

This is Freirean *alignment*

- Dialogue, not transmission
- Humanisation vs domestication
- Education as ethical and political practice
- Learners as knowers, not recipients

A SEND lens offers a different logic

Anticipatory

Barrier-aware

Strengths-based

SEND is not about labels: it is about noticing before students fail

Support considerations across the 4 areas of need

- Specific Learning Difficulty (e.g. dyslexia) targeted support
- Adapted slides / handouts etc.
- Working / long term memory
- Research and retrieval skills
- Concentration / focus
- Creative /critical skills
- Meta-cognition

Cognitive and Learning

- Physical access e.g. Room layout / location / set up of resources
- Auxiliary aids
- Gross and fine motor skills
- Stamina – e.g. breaks
- Hyper / hypo sensitivity to environment
- Sensory processing / integration

Physical and Sensory

- Expressive modes
- Understanding
- Social interaction
- Oracy and dialogue
- Questions
- Team / group work / collaboration / peer working

Speech, Language and Communication

- Mental health
- Relationships
- Self-esteem and confidence
- Motivation
- Self-control
- Self-care or care of others
- Resilience & tenacity
- Expressing / managing feelings
- Well-being

Social, Emotional and Mental Health

Example

The Testing Effect: Retrieval practice
as low-stakes 'quizzing'

Reducing anxiety and building confidence: low stakes practice – quiz formats for different needs

For students who freeze under pressure:

- Open-book quizzes initially
- "Phone a friend" option (can ask one person one question)
- No time limits
- Can have second attempt immediately
- Self-marking with mark scheme provided

For students who need immediate feedback:

- Kahoot or Wayground [Quizizz] (instant results, gamified)
- Self-checking flashcards (answer on reverse)
- Online quizzes with instant scoring
- Partner quizzes where students swap and mark

For students who struggle with writing:

- Multiple choice questions
- Drag-and-drop digital activities
- Verbal quizzes (speak answers instead of write)
- Point to answer options

Universal Design for Learning [UDL]

THE THREE PILLARS OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING

MULTIPLE MEANS OF ENGAGEMENT



- Offer choices
- Foster collaboration
- Sustain effort

MULTIPLE MEANS in REPRESENTATION

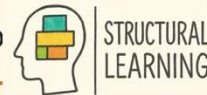


- Present information in different ways
- Use multiple media
- Support understanding

MULTIPLE MEANS ACTION AND EXPRESSION



- Provide options for communication
- Vary methods of response
- Guide go



UDL emphasises the creation of instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments that are inherently flexible.

Build accessibility into initial planning, ensuring lessons naturally accommodate diverse learning needs

The 'why' of learning
The 'what' of learning
The 'how' of learning

A familiar student

Meets entry requirements

Capable

Motivated

Quietly struggling

Makes few notes

Disorganised

Starting to fall behind

Questions.

Whose
knowledge
counts?

Whose practices
are rewarded?

Under compassion

Concern

Adjustment

Referral

Under adaptive pedagogy

Anticipatory – Responsive – Ethically reflexive

Access designed in

High expectations preserved

Science and health disciplines

Amount of substantive content

Challenges of disciplinary practices

Pace

Abstraction

Cognitive load in dense content disciplines

Not lowering standards...

but clarifying access to them:

- Reduce extraneous cognitive load
- Scaffold intrinsic cognitive load
- Multiple representations in scientific explanation
- Dialogue vs performative “participation”
- Assessment formats privileging certain processing styles
- Lab/practical teaching as a sensory and social experience

Choice in methods – modality options

Written Options:

- Traditional notes
- Mind maps
- Bullet point summaries
- Question and answer format
- Create quiz questions for others

Creative Options:

- Create posters or infographics
- Make revision videos (screencast or self-recording)
- Build models or demonstrations
- Design board games or card games about topics
- Write songs or raps
- Create TikTok-style short videos

Verbal Options:

- Record voice explanations
- Teach someone else (family, friend, study group)
- Create podcasts or 'revision radio'
- Answer questions out loud (record for playback)

Digital Options:

- Build a revision website or blog
- Create PowerPoint presentations
- Design Canva infographics
- Make Quizlet sets
- Use Padlet or OneNote for organised notes

Pedagogy




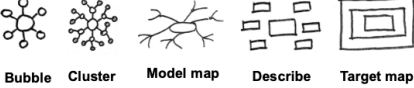
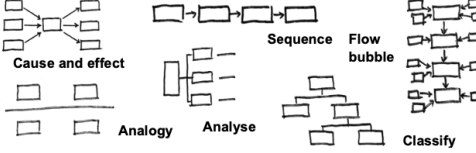
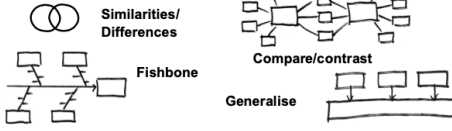


Learning intentions and success criteria

Thinking activities & Processing levels

Graphic Organisers

Outcomes and products

Evidence of learning

 Unistuctural to Multistuctural	 Relational	 Extended Abstract
Quantitative. Gives one piece of information in response moving to giving several pieces of information. No reasons or linkage given. May recall facts without understanding or find information from the text.	Quantitative and Qualitative. Shows how several pieces of information link together, seems purposeful or strategic. Can demonstrate integration of facts and ideas. Application to new and unfamiliar situations.	Quantitative and Qualitative. Goes beyond relational to make links to other concepts/generalises to a different domain or context. Justifying; presenting & defending opinions; weighing validity/ quality with respect to established criteria. Aspects of creation & originality.
Key command verbs Ask Generalise Measure Name Rephrase Choose Give examples Observe Report Cite Copy Identify Outline Quote Reproduce Define Illustrate Read Retell Demonstrate Indicate Recall Restate Discuss Infer Interpret Recite Review Duplicate Label Recognise Select Estimate List Record Show Spell Express Extend Locate Remember State Find Match Repeat Summarise Tell Write	Key command verbs Analyse Apply Dissect Divide Manipulate Select Appraise Arrange Dramatise Order Separate Associate Employ Establish Organise Sequence Breakdown Examine Execute Perform Show Simplify Calculate Experiment Find Plan Practice Simulate Solve Carry out Focus Group Prioritize Summarise Categorise Choose Illustrate Question Rank Survey Classify Connect Implement Infer Reason Relate Tabulate Teach Construct Correlate Interpret Reorganise Transfer Demonstrate Interview Represent Translate Develop Discover Investigate Link Research Use	Key command verbs Adapt Decide Deduct Explain Extend Produce Appraise Defend Design Formulate Propose Prove Argue Assess Determine Hypothesise Rate Build Change Develop Devise Imagine Improve Recommend Combine Disprove Discover Infer Influence Revise Solve Compare Discover Dispute Innovate Integrate Speculate Compose Distinguish Invent Interpret Substitute Conclude Elaborate Judge Justify Test Theorise Construct Estimate Model Modify Transform Convert Create Evaluate Perceive Persuade Validate Criticise Debate Experiment Predict Prioritise Visualise
Outcomes and Products Cartoon Examples Photograph Story Chart Collage Explanation Poster Quiz Summary Collection Fact Recording Table Definition Glossary Reproduction Test Diagram Label List Show and tell Workbook Dictionary Outline Speech Worksheet	Outcomes and Products Analogy Diary Journal Questionnaire Analysis Draft Model Report Argument Drama Filmstrip Performance Sculpture Cartoon Conclusion Forecast Graph Poster Simulation Demonstration Illustration Presentation Survey Diagram Interview Project Puzzle Syllogism	Outcomes and Products Abstract Article Database Plan Play Poem Set of rules or Advertisement Experiment Film Project principles Song Book Game Recommendation Story Chart Checklist Graph Invention Report Spreadsheet Comic Strip Media Product Role play Storyboard Court trial Painting Self-evaluation Survey
Graphic Organiser 	Graphic Organiser 	Graphic Organiser 
Questions/Stems [What, When, Where, Which, Who] What is ...? What happened...? When did ...? When was...? Where did...? Where is...? Which one ...? List three ... Can you recall ...? Can you choose/select ...? Who was ...? Who were...? Label the main parts of... Estimate/Outline which... Define/ describe ... Which facts or ideas show that...? How would you summarise ...? What examples can you find to ...? Identify the characteristics of... What can you say about ...? Demonstrate when/where... Who/What were the key...? What is the main idea of ...? SOLO Taxonomy Pedagogy Planning Toolkit   Dr Katy Bloom York St John University @bloom_growhow	Questions/Stems [Previous, plus How, Why] Explain what is happening when... How isanalogous to....? How would you use/ apply...? How would you organise to show ...? What is meant by . . . ? Use your findings to develop? What conclusions can you draw ...? How would you explain ...? Why did ...? What would result if ...? What facts or ideas would you select to prove ...? Identify the different parts of...? Illustrate which parts/features of ...? What is the function of ...? How does.....occur? Prioritize/ Rank/Sequence...? What is the relationship between...? What contributions do.....make to...? Is this a correlation or a causation? What is the theme of...? Why does the character...? What motive is shown by ...? Using what we have practised, how would you solve...? Why do you think ...? What inference can you make ...? How would you categorise/ classify ...? What evidence can you find ...? Give reasons why ...?	Questions/Stems [Previous, plus How, Why, could, might] How would you evaluate/ adapt/improve...? How could you determine...? Assess the value/importance of...? What is your opinion of...? Do you support the outcomes/ actions of...? What would you recommend...? What would you select/how would you justify...? How would you prove/disprove...? Why did they (person/character) choose...? How would you rank/prioritise the...? Which is the best answer/model ...? What might happen if you combined ...? What would happen if...? What data supports the conclusion and why...? How would you adapt to create a different...? What could be done to minimise (or maximise)...? How would you create/design a new ...? What ideas can you add to ...? What would you predict/infer from ...? What changes would you make to solve ...? Can you propose an alternative...? Can you formulate a theory for/ hypothesise why...? What solutions would you suggest for ...?

Participation is not neutral

Talk for learning

Confidence

Speed

Modelling

Multiple representations

Pace and transition

Structured group work

Alternative ways of demonstrating competence

Three reframing questions

Who adapts to whom?

What is individualised that should be universal?

What do we mean by rigour?

Inclusion is intellectual work

Compassion is necessary, but it is not sufficient.

Inclusion requires curriculum design and pedagogical courage.

Thank you.