

TLRP's evidence-informed pedagogic principles¹

TLRP's evidence-informed principles are the product of an iterative process of consultation and debate between researchers, practitioners, policy-makers and the TLRP Directors' Team. It should be noted that these are in a continuous process of development. They were first formulated as the conclusion of TLRP's school-focused portfolio, but it was felt that they broadly resonate with evidence from projects working in other sectors – pre-school, FE, HE, workplace learning, adult learning.

The version of the principles given below is therefore an attempt to conceptualise the principles in a way that makes them applicable to all sectors. Three changes are fundamental.

First, the phrase 'teaching and learning' is replaced by 'pedagogy' because teachers and teaching, as such, are less evident in post-compulsory settings. Some people argue that 'pedagogy', by definition, has application only to the learning of children. But learning processes, as distinct from learning contexts, do not fundamentally change as children become adults, so we have retained 'pedagogy'. The term 'pedagogy' also has the advantage of highlighting the contingent nature of effective teaching i.e. the interventions of teachers or trainers are most effective when they are planned in response to how learners are learning.

Secondly, we have attempted to broaden the conception of what is to be learned, beyond the notions of curricula and subjects associated with schools. Thirdly, we have given more prominence to the importance of learning relationships which are crucial in all sectors.

1. Effective pedagogy equips learners for life in its broadest sense. Learning should aim to help individuals and groups to develop the intellectual, personal and social resources that will enable them to participate as active citizens, contribute to economic development and flourish as individuals in a diverse and changing society. This means adopting a broad conception of worthwhile learning outcomes and taking seriously issues of equity and social justice for all.

2. Effective pedagogy engages with valued forms of knowledge. Pedagogy should engage learners with the big ideas, key skills and processes, modes of discourse, ways of thinking and practising, attitudes and relationships, which are the most valued learning processes and outcomes in particular contexts. They need to understand what constitutes quality, standards and expertise in different settings.

3. Effective pedagogy recognises the importance of prior experience and learning. Pedagogy should take account of what the learner knows already in order for them, and those who support their learning, to plan their next steps. This includes building on prior learning but also taking account of the personal and cultural experiences of different groups of learners.

4. Effective pedagogy requires learning to be scaffolded. Teachers, trainers and all those, including peers, who support the learning of others, should provide activities, cultures and structures of intellectual, social and emotional support to help learners to

move forward in their learning. When these supports are removed the learning needs to be secure.

5. Effective pedagogy needs assessment to be congruent with learning.

Assessment should be designed and implemented with the goal of achieving maximum validity both in terms of learning outcomes and learning processes. It should help to advance learning as well as determine whether learning has occurred.

6. Effective pedagogy promotes the active engagement of the learner.

A chief goal of learning should be the promotion of learners' independence and autonomy. This involves acquiring a repertoire of learning strategies and practices, developing positive learning dispositions, and having the will and confidence to become agents in their own learning.

7. Effective pedagogy fosters both individual and social processes and outcomes.

Learners should be encouraged and helped to build relationships and communication with others for learning purposes, in order to assist the mutual construction of knowledge and enhance the achievements of individuals and groups. Consulting learners about their learning and giving them a voice is both an expectation and a right.

8. Effective pedagogy recognises the significance of informal learning.

Informal learning, such as learning out of school or away from the workplace, should be recognised as at least as significant as formal learning and should therefore be valued and appropriately utilised in formal processes.

9. Effective pedagogy depends on the learning of all those who support the learning of others.

The need for lecturers, teachers, trainers and co-workers to learn continuously in order to develop their knowledge and skill, and adapt and develop their roles, especially through practice-based inquiry, should be recognised and supported.

10. Effective pedagogy demands consistent policy frameworks with support for learning as their primary focus.

Organisational and system level policies need to recognise the fundamental importance of continual learning - for individual, team, organisational and system success - and be designed to create effective learning environments for all learners.

ⁱ Key principles developed by the Teaching and Learning Research Programme (TLRP) www.tlrp.org