

Handout: Boundaries

There will be professional boundaries within which to work and it's important not to overstep these, for example, by becoming too friendly and personal with your learners. Boundaries are about knowing where your role as a teacher stops. You should be able to work within the limits of that role, but know that it's okay to ask for help when necessary. Don't try to take on too much, or carry out something which is part of someone else's role. If you are ever in any doubt about the boundaries of your role, or how you should act in certain situations, you should ask for advice.

You should be able to maintain appropriate standards of conduct and fulfil your role and responsibilities in a professional way. This will involve not only how you act with your learners, but also with your colleagues, support staff and other staff, for example, external visitors. Having boundaries will help you remain professional in your role.

Boundaries can often be thought of as the negative aspects of your role.

Examples

Identifying needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• demands from managers• expectations of learners• funding constraints• knowing what advice and/or information can and cannot be given to learners• lack of information regarding learners' requirements• learners not at the required starting level• negative culture within a department or organisation• organisational policies, procedures and administrative requirements• requirements of codes of practice, awarding organisations and external bodies
Planning learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• access to resources e.g. photocopying• capability of learners to achieve• financial and funding concerns: organisation and learners• health and safety regulations• lack of access to computers and technology based learning materials• lack of adequate equipment• not enough knowledge of learners• requirements of, or a lack of, understanding of the course requirements• unsupportive colleagues

Facilitating learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ability of learners e.g. lack of English • barriers to learning such as access, or a lack of specialist equipment, people and resources • behaviour issues • broken or faulty equipment and resources • changes in legislation, codes of practice, policies and procedures • deadlines and targets • disruptive learners • hindering an individual's progress because they are learning more quickly or more slowly than the rest of the group • inability to be flexible when teaching, to take into account the individual needs of learners • inappropriate actions of self or learners • inappropriate seating or working areas • lack of a suitable environment • lack of own subject knowledge • learners' demands or high expectations • learners' lack of motivation • learners' personal and welfare issues • not enough time • own personal problems • requirements of relevant legislation e.g. risk assessments • safeguarding requirements
Assessing learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being biased or unfair with judgements • data protection and confidentiality • demands of administrative duties • giving some learners more support than others • meeting deadlines and targets • not enough evidence from learners to make a decision • not enough time to correctly mark or assess learners' work • passing learners just to achieve targets
Evaluating learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • awarding organisation's demands e.g. internal and external quality assurance activities • lack of time to attend training events, standardisation activities or meetings • organisation's targets and demands • own ability to listen to and react to feedback