

How teachers can manage diversity in the classroom

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South African teachers grapple with diversity each day as they implement methods and strategies to deliver the curriculum in ways that inspire all the young minds in their classrooms. From schools to workplaces there are clear all-round benefits in engaging fulsomely with diversity, appreciating it and drawing on its systemic strengths.



The concept of neurodiversity promotes the recognition that cognitive differences are to be understood and respected as accepted human variations and are not grounds for exclusion from general school life and classroom participation. Neurodiversity in the classroom may include attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and the autistic spectrum, amongst others. As a result, teachers may need to optimally manage students experiencing specific learning disorders and presenting impairment in reading, written expression or mathematics.

However, when it comes to the classroom, diversity is always inherently present because children's brains are growing and changing. They follow unique learning paths and develop different styles of learning. While we organise classes by fixed age groupings, learners demonstrate a notable variability in their capabilities which can impact on reading, motor skills, mental processing, word retrieval, telling the time, arithmetic, executive function, memory, estimating, social skills and more. Teachers need classroom strategies that help them keep a diversity of learners altogether inspired to learn while keeping their curriculum delivery on track.

This is the topic of an upcoming Sacap (The South African College of Applied Psychology) webinar – *Diversity in the classroom* on Saturday, 23 July 2022 from 9am to 10.30am. Free for teachers, Sacap's professional panel will unpack the impact of diversity in the classroom and the role of educators in managing it. Natalie Donaldson, Sacap's head of Teaching and Learning says: "Over the past two decades, we have seen South African classrooms become more and more diverse. This is not just about the cultural backgrounds of the learners but also the ways that they engage and learn. In order to ensure a quality learning experience for all, educators need to find ways to meet the unique needs of all learners in their classrooms."

The webinar will also include a presentation by educational psychologist and Sacap educator, Juan-Pierre Moller who will deep-dive into the five areas of cognitive functioning and the diverse levels that a teacher can face in one class. Juan-Pierre will include practical ways teachers can apply inclusive education in and outside of their classroom. Other presenters include Sacap's school liaison co-ordinator, Kiara Parsuram and Dr Diana de Sousa, educational and research psychologist, and chair of Sacap's Research and Ethics Committee.

Teachers are invited to join the conversation and discover new inclusive education strategies. [Register for free here.](#)

Sacap webinar – *Diversity in the classroom*:

Date: Saturday, 23 July 2022

Time: 9am to 10.30am

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