

MA EDUCATION
ALL-WALES MODULE TEMPLATE

Faculty/ School/ College	All institutions: Aberystwyth University Bangor University Cardiff Metropolitan University Swansea University University of Wales Trinity Saint David University of South Wales Wrexham University		
Date of Approval	March 2026		
Module Title	Equity, Poverty and Disadvantage in Educational Practice (EPDE)	Module Code	EDW721
Level	FHEQ 7 (Level M)	Credits	20
Type of Module	Optional	Method of Delivery	Blended
Formal Contact Hours	22	Total Notional Hours	200
Placement Learning Hours	0	Independent Learning Hours	178
Delivery Location	All institutions	Evaluation Method (for Governance)	<i>PTES Institutional Programme Monitoring</i>
Cost Centre	All institutions		

Module Synopsis to be printed in the catalogue - please provide a short outline of the module.

This module aims to develop students' advanced understanding of poverty, diversity, and educational equity, and the structural dimensions of inequality and disadvantage, such as poverty, within education. Students will critically explore how factors like poverty, cultural background, ethnicity, disability, and social class intersect to shape educational experiences and outcomes. Wales is currently facing deep and persistent challenges: around 28–31% of children live in poverty, a figure that has remained worryingly high for decades and is among the highest rates in the UK. This module will encourage students to engage critically with the realities of socio-economic status as a wicked problem for educators and the education system in Wales.

Notes to be printed in catalogue - please state if the module is a core, compulsory or optional module for a programme. Please outline the target audience for this module, etc.

This module is an optional module that will be delivered in part-two of the taught phase of the degree. The module is optional for the MA Education (Wales) but core for the MA Education (Wales) Equity in Education pathway. The target audience for this module will be educators working in different sectors and settings. The module relates theory and practice concerning poverty, diversity, and educational equity across education. Students will have the opportunity to reflect upon their own practice through the lens of the critically aware, inclusive educational practitioner. Structural and international perspectives will be addressed through exploration and examination of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals that underpin national policies.	
Is there a placement component to the module? Please provide details.	No
Will the module be delivered in collaboration with another organisation? Please provide details.	All institutions
What percentage of the module will be taught in Welsh? Please outline examples, e.g. mentorship or personal tutoring, etc)?	100%
Module Aims - please provide a couple of short aims outlining the intentions of the module: e.g. This module aims to prepare practice teachers for their role in facilitating learning for students studying for a postgraduate qualification.	
This module aims: 1. To critically analyse contested definitions of equity, inequality, poverty, disadvantage and inclusion, and apply evidence informed responses to these concepts in real educational contexts. 2. To equip students with the critical skills to analyse, debate, and reflect on contested issues of inequality and diversity within contemporary education, including the effectiveness of policies and practices addressing these challenges. 3. To foster students' ability to reflect critically on their own values, experiences, and educational contexts, particularly in relation to how learning and development are measured, and how these practices support or hinder equity and inclusion. 4. To enable students to plan, implement and evaluate change in practice within educational professional contexts, informed by whole-system approaches and anti-discriminatory perspectives. 5. To strengthen students' capacity to engage with Welsh policy, anti-racist strategy and poverty reduction initiatives in critically reflective and practically meaningful ways.	
Module Intended Learning Outcomes (please include 4-7 learning outcomes)	
By the end of the module the student should be able to: 1. Demonstrate a critical, evidence-informed understanding of how poverty, inequality and marginalisation of particular groups of families and communities' impact on educational outcomes and experiences. 2. Analyse and debate the effectiveness of current educational policy and practice in Wales and internationally, including current vision, structures and its dominant hegemony, and the extent to which this contributes to the perpetuation of disadvantage, for example, in institutionalized racism. 3. Evaluate psychological, sociological and intersectional explanations of educational inequality, including prejudice, discrimination, deficit thinking, structural racism and social reproduction. 4. Reflect on their own experiences and those of others, considering how bias, expectations, and systemic factors influence learning and development. 5. Analyse how structural factors (poverty, race, language, migration, family resources and community context) interact to shape learner engagement, attainment and progression. 6. Design, justify and evaluate an equity-informed change in educational practice, drawing on whole-systems thinking and evidence from policy, research and professional contexts.	

Relevant Programme Outcomes

- K1. An in-depth, systematic and advanced knowledge of the variety, complexity and multi-faceted nature of education, both in their own context and beyond.
- K2. A critical evaluation of current policy, theoretical and practice-based perspectives at a local, national and international level.
- K3. A critical reflection and interpretation, synthesis and application of knowledge and research in their own professional contexts.
- K4. A comprehensive, critical evaluation and synthesis of relevant literature.
- K8. The ability to communicate accurately and clearly to a wide range of audiences.
- S1. Apply engagement with theory and evidence to develop new personal and professional perspectives of own professional practice.
- S2. Arrive at evidence-informed conclusions relating to complex issues in education in general, and in their area of professional practice in particular.
- S3. Evaluate own learning needs in order to set and review own professional learning objectives.
- S4. Apply systematic approaches to critically evaluate their own practice in relation to the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership (Welsh Government, 2019).
- S8. Develop clear and appropriate writing styles in Welsh or English, which are accessible to a range of audiences.
- S9. Apply their knowledge, understanding and transferable skills to engage with, support and where appropriate, to influence others.

Transferable/Employability/Graduate Skills

I = included in module content; A = included in module assessment; N/A

Master's degrees are awarded to students who have demonstrated:

1. A systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice.

Students will be assessed for their knowledge and critical awareness relating to the module topic. All students will be expected to relate this to their own practice.

2. A comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship, and;
3. Originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline.

Students will be introduced to, and expected to engage critically with, the core literature, evidence and techniques for enquiry in relation to the module topic. This is in order to demonstrate the appropriate application of research and scholarship in their own practice and their critical evaluation of the same, in order to arrive at an ever-deeper understanding of the topic as it applies to professionals.

4. Conceptual understanding that enables the student:
 - to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline
 - to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.

Students will be supported to build skills in relation to critical analysis and develop a critical appreciation of the evidence they have engaged with in order to conceptualise and apply the knowledge in this topic to their own practice, and to develop their own theories of action in relation to the topic.

Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:

1. Deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

Students will be encouraged to understand that there are no 'right answers' in their discipline and that effective professional practice involves making judicious decisions on their own account, using evidence to guide their choices and using reflection to evaluate them. In the course of their practice, students will be encouraged to ensure that their use of their growing knowledge base enables them not only to develop as professionals, but also to work with peers, learners, parents and carers, ensuring that they can communicate effectively with a range of audiences.

2. Demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level.

Assessments are all designed to require students to show how they are able to problematise their practice, and how they can use evidence, action planning and reflection to solve problems both autonomously and in collaboration with peers.

3. Continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.

All module content is intended to challenge students to reconsider what they think they know, to adopt critical mindsets and to be ready to adapt what they do, in light of the new knowledge and understanding they encounter during the module.

4. Qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring:
 - the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility
 - decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations
 - independent learning ability.

Throughout the module, students will be encouraged to:

- a. Form conclusions about their own practice such that they become more confident in making decisions with, and in the absence of, all of the information they need.
- b. Be reflective such that they can take responsibility for the decisions they make.
- c. Understand where they can turn to in order to further inform their decision-making.

Syllabus – Indicative Content - *please provide information about the curriculum*

This module will cover the following areas:

- Key concepts in context: equity, equality, diversity, inclusion, poverty and disadvantage in education; why precise definitions matter for policy, practice and research.
- Data, trends and “the system”: national statistics on poverty and inequality (e.g. child poverty rates, housing, labour market) and how system level structures (funding, accountability, marketisation) shape opportunities and constraints in schools and colleges.
- Poverty, development and learning: research evidence on the effects of poverty on cognitive, social, emotional and physical development, and how these contribute to long-term educational and life inequalities.
- Intersectionality and educational outcomes: how poverty intersects with ethnicity, gender, disability, home language and family background to shape access, participation, attainment and progression, including free school meals and other attainment gaps in Wales.
- Lived experience and professional voice: firsthand accounts from learners, families and practitioners; how practitioner perceptions, expectations and everyday practices can reproduce or disrupt disadvantage.
- Sociological and critical perspectives: deficit models, Bernstein, Bourdieu (habitus, capital, symbolic power), school cultures and social reproduction; structure and agency debates and the limits of classroom/setting only solutions.
- Structural racism and discrimination: institutional and systemic racism and sexism; neocolonial dimensions of curriculum and knowledge, assimilationist approaches to diversity, and their impacts on learners and communities.
- Policy frameworks and system responses: key Welsh policies and initiatives (e.g. Curriculum for Wales, Pupil Development Grant, universal free school meals, ALN reforms, Community Focused Schools), alongside international approaches; aims, implementation challenges and evidence of impact.
- Curriculum, knowledge and decolonisation: the curriculum as cultural selection and political settlement; decolonising curriculum “beyond representation” to address knowledge, power and legitimacy.
- Assessment, accountability and inequality: how assessment regimes (exams vs coursework, teacher assessment, extended tasks, inspection and accountability) can mitigate or exacerbate inequality; implications for design, moderation and support.
- Educators’ roles, dilemmas and ethics: the educator’s role at the intersection of teaching and social care; moral distress, ethical overload, “wicked problems”, and whole system perspectives (school–family–community–policy).
- Strategies for equity and inclusion: evidence informed interventions and creative strategies (e.g. community focused schools, breakfast clubs, family engagement, mentoring, universal design for learning, multiagency partnership), including how to identify and address institutional and systemic barriers to equity.

Learning and Teaching Delivery Strategies/Methods (SCHEDULED: lecture, seminar, tutorial, project supervision, demonstration, practical classes, workshops, supervised time in studio/workshop, fieldwork, external visits. NON-CONTACT: guided independent study; PLACEMENT: work-based learning; placement; year abroad)			
Method	Rationale	Type of Contact (scheduled/ guided independent study/placement)	Total hours
Lectures	Students will engage in lectures and workshops, face-to-face and online, to explore and examine the key concepts in this module.	Scheduled	16
Seminars	Seminars will encourage students to build confidence and deepen their understanding of the concepts being taught in smaller groups. Approaches to seminar delivery will include 'flipped learning approaches' whereby students interrogate key issues before further exploration with their peers, supported by course tutors, as well as Problem-Based Learning and challenge-based learning approaches.	Scheduled	6
Self-Directed Tasks and Individual Study Time	Between scheduled sessions, students will have opportunities to engage in wider reading, undertake independent tasks to test out ideas and to build confidence in their own professional practice.	Independent	178
Required Reading (Max 2) Please list 5-7 seminal and/or current texts. Please check that the texts / editions are in the library before you add to the reading list. A more detailed reading list can be provided in the handbook and on VLE.			
- Beckett, L. (ed.) (2023) <i>Child poverty in Wales: exploring the challenges for schooling future generations</i>. Cardiff: University of Wales Press. - Schuelka, M. J., Johnstone, C. J., Thomas, G., & Artiles, A. J. (Eds.). (2019). <i>The SAGE Handbook of Inclusion and Diversity in Education</i>. London: SAGE Publications Limited.			
Recommended Further Reading (Max 5)			
- Freire, P. (1993) <i>PEDAGOGY OF THE OPPRESSED</i>. London: Penguin Books. - Gillborn, D. (2015) <i>Education policy as an act of White supremacy: Whiteness, critical race theory and education reform</i>. London: Routledge. - Harris, A. and Jones, M.S. (2020) <i>System recall: leading for equity and excellence in education</i>. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin (Corwin Impact Leadership Series). - Horgan, D. and Gray, A. (eds.) (2021) <i>Children, young people and poverty: Global contexts, local solutions</i>. Bristol: Policy Press. - Reay, D. (2017) <i>Miseducation: Inequality, education and the working classes</i>. Bristol: Policy Press.			
Recommended Journal: Equity & Excellence in Education (Open Access), Taylor and Francis.			
Please provide details of inclusive learning and teaching approaches/access to specialist requirements.			

All teaching materials will be available on the VLE.

All handouts, presentations and online course materials will use high-contrast text/ background colours and legible fonts.

The module will explore different perspectives within and outside the UK and develop the students' critical thinking and awareness of different perspectives on issues relating to diversity in ethnicity, culture and nationality.

Assessment & Feedback

Method of Moderation to be used

Moderation by sampling of the cohort.

Assessment Methods

Assessment Code and Method	Learning Outcomes to be met	Duration/Length of Assessment Method	Weighting of Assessment (%)	Threshold	Approximate Date of Submission
Portfolio of evidence (See below)	All	4000 words	100	50	End of Easter holiday (Approximately April 30 th).

Rationale for Assessment

Assessments are designed to ensure parity of provision and experience for all students. All students will benefit from formative feedback throughout the module, which will be bespoke to their needs. Students will complete the same summative assessment per module.

Rules for Multiple Assessments (**Please delete as appropriate.*)

There are no multiple assessments for this module.

In what ways will students receive feedback on assessed work, including formal examinations?

Please delete those statements that do not apply. This list is not exhaustive and you may add additional feedback methods as appropriate.

Turnitin	Feedback against the assessment rubric and a word bank. Use of feedback box on Turnitin (with an option for three minutes of verbal feedback as appropriate). Marks to be returned via Turnitin.
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Please provide details of inclusive assessment provision/access to specialist requirements. This should include details of alternative assessment which may be undertaken by students with specific requirements.

Students will be able to submit assignments in a format that is adapted to their individual needs where an Individual Support Plan (or other local equivalent) is in place, or where appropriate reasonable adjustments have been negotiated. This may include additional time for completion of assignments, support with reading and/or academic writing and access to assessment rubrics in various formats (electronic, large print, specific fonts). All students are also able to submit applications for extenuating/mitigating circumstances as required throughout completion of the module.

Please provide details of how students would redeem a failure in the module.

**N.B. Level 6 students on traditional programmes will resit / resubmit according to level 6 regulations*

All students have two opportunities to retrieve a failure in a module (second and third attempts are capped at 50%). No further retrieval opportunities will be offered.

Detail of proposed assessment: Portfolio of evidence (4,000 words)

Assessment Portfolio Component 1: Reflective case study (2,000 words)

A portfolio element that integrates practice evidence, structured reflection and critical engagement with theory and policy.

- Learners select one setting, group or locality where poverty, inequality or marginalisation is clearly shaping educational experiences (e.g. racially minoritised learners in a Welsh school/college, care experienced young people, Gypsy/Roma/Traveller communities).

Students should:

- Analyse how intersecting factors such as poverty, race, language, disability or migration status impact outcomes, participation and wellbeing, drawing on robust research evidence and local data.
- Connect the case to relevant Welsh and international policy (e.g. Curriculum for Wales, anti-racist education policy, UNCRC, OECD work on equity), evaluating how policy discourses and dominant hegemonies (e.g. meritocracy, performativity, deficit narratives) shape practice and potentially reproduce disadvantage (including institutionalised racism).
- Interrogate their own role within this context, using critical reflection to surface bias, expectations and assumptions, and to consider how these interact with institutional cultures and structures.

Assessment Portfolio Component 2: Equity and inclusion project change proposal and literature/policy rationale (2,000 words)

A practice based inquiry in which learners design, and justify strategies and changing practice to promote equity and inclusion.

- Learners identify a specific equity challenge in their context (e.g. attendance or exclusion rates for a particular group, language access for sanctuary seeking learners, belonging for LGBTQ+ students, racialised attainment or other gaps related to socio-economic status).