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English Programs

Prince Edward Island Peer Helping Curriculum

Career Education

Peer Helping
501/601A

CURRICULUM



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Resources and instructional and assessment strategies for this course are available for teachers online. Please contact the Department of Education, Early Learning and Culture for access to these resources.

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Introduction

Peer Helping (PHP501/601A) is a full credit course offered at the Grade 11/12 level which allows students to gain valuable skills while assisting their peers in their learning environment.

Peer helpers gain experience in a variety of areas, including leadership skills, inclusion strategies, ethics, learning abilities, learning supports, and motivating others. They apply these new skills and knowledge to their daily work with peers in a classroom learning environment. Peer helpers learn the importance of helping others learn and assisting targeted students to gain a skill set that will help them in life, learning, and work.

The need for increased in-class supports for students with learning disabilities and special needs at the high school level was paramount in the development of this program, but the primary focus is on the skills and knowledge attained by students who act as peer helpers. The course began as a local pilot in one Island high school and expanded to several other high schools as its purpose and curriculum evolved. As the program developed, a provincial training program was implemented to assist peer helpers in effectively meeting the demands of their unique role in the school setting. The overall impact on the school environment was realized as the number of students requiring assistance grew and it became evident that their learning needs were being partially addressed by the Peer Helping Program. Today, Peer Helping 501A and 601A courses are offered in all English high schools and the curriculum has been translated for use in the French language high schools. Hundreds of Island students have crossed high school graduation stages because of the support and encouragement they received from the peer helpers who dedicated themselves to this course and its vision. What began as a means to offer service to identified students is now a meaningful, sometimes life-changing, educational experience for peer helpers and the students they assist.

Rationale

Preparing students who have a desire to help others achieve success has strengthened the peer to peer support model. This creates a positive learning environment for students, provides an opportunity to achieve success in school and life, and assists Peer Helpers to realize a level of satisfaction through assisting their peers.

The Peer Helping course offers selected students an opportunity to learn more about themselves and how they learn, realize their potential in helping peers, and learn/refine individual skills in personal relationships, communication with others, and leadership. Many peer helpers transition in life and engage in a helping profession because of their experience in the peer helping course. As a result of their participation in the peer helping program, students involved as peer helpers have become much more aware of how to match their individual skill set with potential careers.

Course Description

PHP501A – Peer Helping

Students enrolled in this course will have an opportunity to earn a credit while helping and supporting the learning of other students with special, unique educational needs. Peer helpers develop their leadership skills by assisting students in meeting the many challenges they encounter in differentiated learning environments and in the resource room. Students will examine the characteristics of various learning disabilities while developing their understanding of concepts such as diversity, ethics, and inclusion.

After being selected through an application and interview process, successful applicants will participate in a training program outlining the roles and responsibilities of peer helpers, and are provided with strategies and techniques to utilize while meeting the specific individual needs of his/her assigned student(s). Peer helpers will facilitate one-on-one learning with students and are closely monitored by the classroom teacher and the peer helping teacher.

PHP601A – Peer Helping

Students enrolled in this course will have an opportunity to earn a credit while helping and supporting the learning of other students with special, unique educational needs. Peer helpers at this level will develop their leadership skills by assisting students in differentiated learning environments and in the resource room, as well as by taking a more active role in provincial training. Students will research learning disabilities more deeply while further developing their understanding of concepts such as diversity, ethics, and inclusion.

After being selected through an application and interview process, successful applicants will participate in a training program outlining the roles and responsibilities of peer helpers, and are provided with strategies and techniques to utilize while meeting the specific individual needs of his/her assigned student(s). Peer helpers will facilitate one-on-one learning with students and are closely monitored by the classroom teacher and the peer helping teacher.

This group of peer helpers will enhance their understanding of the students they are assigned by researching the students' particular conditions and contributing ideas to development of the students' Individual Education Plans (as appropriate). Selection of these peer helpers will stem from successes observed in the PHP501A program and successful completion of the referral and application process.

Through special consideration, students may take PHP601A without having taken PHP501A.

Program Design and Components

Employability Skills

In the past, technical and job-specific skills were sufficient to successfully participate in the labour market. Workers now need a more comprehensive set of mega-competencies that are not occupation-specific and are transferable across all facets of life and work.

The phrase *Employability Skills* was coined by the Conference Board of Canada in 1992 to describe

- those skills which provide the basic foundation to learn other skills;
- the combination of skills, attitudes, and behaviours to
 - › get, keep, and progress on a job;
 - › work with others on a job;
 - › achieve the best results.

We now realize that these generic skills are needed throughout all career and life development activities, are not limited in their applicability, and may be used in all environments. Employability Skills 2000+, an update of the original version, includes the skills needed to enter, stay in, and progress in the world of work - either individually or as part of a team. Employability Skills 2000+ is organized into three skill groups:

1. Fundamental Skills - skills needed as a base for further development. You will be better prepared to progress in the world of work when you can communicate, manage information, use numbers, and think and solve problems.
2. Personal Management Skills - the personal skills, attitudes, and behaviours that drive one's potential for growth. You will be able to offer yourself greater possibilities when you can demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviours, be responsible, be adaptable, learn continuously, and work safely.
3. Teamwork Skills - the skills and attributes needed to contribute productively. You will be better prepared to add value to the outcomes of a task, project, or team when you can work with others, and participate in projects and tasks.

Essential Skills

Essential Skills include reading text, document use, writing, numeracy, oral communication, thinking skills (including problem solving, decision making, critical thinking, job task planning and organizing, significant use of memory, finding information), working with others, computer use, financial literacy and continuous learning. They were developed by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) as the building blocks we use to learn other, more complicated skills. Having a grounding in Essential Skills helps us to adapt to life and workplace changes. HRSDC's Essential Skills Research Project provides the skills used in all occupations and in a broad range of activities.

The research project shows how the Essential Skills vary in content and difficulty, depending on the job, gives examples of how these skills are used in different jobs, and provides detailed profiles of the skill requirements of a broad range of specific occupations, including examples of materials used in actual workplace situations.

Employability Skills and Essential Skills are the same skills. The Essential Skills Research Project looks in greater detail at these skills. It provides information on different ways these skills are used in the workplace. It also describes the different tasks people perform in their jobs and the different skill levels associated with those tasks.

These skills are used beyond the workplace in a broad range of daily activities. The Employability Skills Profile also includes attitudes and behaviours that employers are looking for.

The Essential Skills and Employability Skills are enabling skills that

- help people perform the tasks required by their occupation and other activities of daily life;
- provide people with a foundation to learn other skills;
- enhance people's ability to adapt to workplace change.

Having and using these skills, attitudes, and behaviours help students make a smoother transition and better connections whether from school to work or further study, from employment back to school, from job to job, and so on. These skills, attitudes, and behaviours will help students to manage the many changes they experience in life.

Essential Graduation Learnings

Essential Graduation Learnings are statements describing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes expected of all students who graduate from high school. Proficiency in the Essential Graduation Learnings will prepare students to continue to learn throughout their lives. These learnings describe expectations not in terms of individual school subjects but in terms of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes developed throughout the curriculum. They confirm that students need to make connections and develop abilities across subject boundaries if they are to be ready to meet the shifting and ongoing demands of life, work, and study today and in the future. Essential Graduation Learnings are cross-curricular, and curriculum in all subject areas is focused to enable students to achieve these learnings. Essential Graduation Learnings, along with the Essential and Employability Skills, serve as a framework for the curriculum development process.

Specific Essential Graduation Learnings

Aesthetic Expression

Graduates will be able to respond with critical awareness to various forms of arts and be able to express themselves through the arts.

Citizenship

Graduates will be able to assess social, cultural, economic, and environmental interdependence in a local and global context.

Communication

Graduates will be able to use the listening, viewing, speaking, reading and writing modes of language(s), and mathematical and scientific concepts and symbols, to think, learn, and communicate effectively.

Personal Development

Graduates will be able to continue to learn and to pursue an active, healthy lifestyle.

Problem Solving

Graduates will be able to use the strategies and processes needed to solve a wide variety of problems, including those requiring language, mathematical, and scientific concepts.

Technology Competency

Graduates will be able to use a variety of technologies, demonstrate an understanding of technological applications, and apply appropriate technologies for solving problems.

Link Between Essential Graduation Learnings and School Skills Frameworks

Essential Graduation Learning	Essential Skill (HRSDC)	Employability Skill (Conference Board of Canada)
Aesthetic Expression	Oral Communication Problem Solving Thinking Skills Finding Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> access, analyse, and apply knowledge and skills from various disciplines (the arts, languages, science, technology, mathematics, social sciences, and the humanities) be creative and innovative in exploring possible solutions to problems plan, design, or carry out a project or task from start to finish with well defined objectives and outcomes
Citizenship	Reading Text Document Use Numeracy Writing Oral Communication Thinking Skills Problem Solving Decision Making Finding Information Working with Others Computer Use Continuous Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> seek different points of view and evaluate them based on facts recognize your own and other people's good efforts assess, weigh, and manage risk be accountable for your actions and the actions of your group be socially responsible and contribute to your community cope with uncertainty be aware of personal and group health and safety practices and procedures, and act in accordance with these be flexible - respect, be open to and supportive of the thoughts, opinions, and contributions of others in a group recognize and respect people's diversity, individual differences, and perspectives understand the role of conflict in a group to reach solutions manage and resolve conflict when appropriate
Communication	Reading Text Document Use Numeracy Writing Oral Communication Working with Others Job Task Planning and Organizing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> read and understand information presented in a variety of forms (words, graphs, charts, diagrams) write and speak so others pay attention and understand listen and ask questions to understand and appreciate the points of view of others share information using a range of information and communications technologies (voice, e-mail, computers) use relevant scientific, technological, and mathematical knowledge and skills to explain or clarify ideas access, analyse, and apply knowledge and skills from various disciplines (the arts, languages, science, technology, mathematics, social sciences, and the humanities) observe and record data using appropriate methods, tools, and technology seek different points of view and evaluate them based on facts recognize the human, interpersonal, technical, scientific, and mathematical dimensions of a problem readily use science, technology, and mathematics as ways to think, gain and share knowledge, solve problems, and make decisions

Essential Graduation Learning	Essential Skill (HRSDC)	Employability Skill (Conference Board of Canada)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work independently or as a part of a team • be open and respond constructively to change • understand and work within the dynamics of a group • ensure that a team’s purpose and objectives are clear • be flexible - respect, be open to and supportive of the thoughts, opinions, and contributions of others in a group • accept and provide feedback in a constructive and considerate manner • contribute to a team by sharing information and expertise • develop a plan, seek feedback, test, revise and implement • adapt to changing requirements and information
Personal Development	Working with Others Job Task Planning and Organizing Continuous Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access, analyse, and apply knowledge and skills from various disciplines (the arts, languages, science, technology, mathematics, social sciences, and the humanities) • feel good about yourself and be confident • deal with people, problems, and situations with honesty, integrity, and personal ethics • recognize your own and other people’s good efforts • take care of your personal health • show interest, initiative, and effort • set goals and priorities, balancing work and personal life • plan and manage time, money, and other resources to achieve goals • assess, weigh, and manage risk • be accountable for your actions and the actions of your group • be socially responsible and contribute to your community • be open and respond constructively to change • learn from your mistakes and accept feedback • cope with uncertainty • be willing to continuously learn and grow • assess personal strengths and areas for development • set your own learning goals • identify and access learning sources and opportunities • plan for and achieve your learning goals • be aware of personal and group health and safety practices and procedures, and act in accordance with these • understand and work within the dynamics of a group • be flexible - respect, be open to and supportive of the thoughts, opinions, and contributions of others in a group • recognize and respect people’s diversity, individual differences, and perspectives • understand the role of conflict in a group to reach solutions

Essential Graduation Learning	Essential Skill (HRSDC)	Employability Skill (Conference Board of Canada)
Problem Solving	Reading Text Document Use Numeracy Writing Oral Communication Working with Others Thinking Skills Computer Use Continuous Learning Problem Solving Decision Making Finding Information Job Task Planning and Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use relevant scientific, technological, and mathematical knowledge and skills to explain or clarify ideas • locate, gather, and organize information using appropriate technology and information systems • access, analyse, and apply knowledge and skills from various disciplines (the arts, languages, science, technology, mathematics, social sciences, and the humanities) • decide what needs to be measured or calculated • observe and record data using appropriate methods, tools, and technology • make estimates and verify calculations • assess situations and identify problems • seek different points of view and evaluate them based on facts • recognize the human, interpersonal, technical, scientific, and mathematical dimensions of a problem • identify the root cause of a problem • be creative and innovative in exploring possible solutions • readily use science, technology, and mathematics as ways to think, gain and share knowledge, solve problems, and make decisions • evaluate solutions to make recommendations or decisions • check to see if a solution works, and act on opportunities for improvement • deal with people, problems, and situations with honesty, integrity, and personal ethics • set goals and priorities, balancing work and personal life • plan and manage time, money, and other resources to achieve goals • assess, weigh, and manage risk • carry out multiple tasks or projects • be innovative and resourceful - identify and suggest alternative ways to achieve goals and get the job done • be open and respond constructively to change • manage and resolve conflict when appropriate • plan, design, or carry out a project or task from start to finish with well defined objectives and outcomes • develop a plan, seek feedback, test, revise, and implement • adapt to changing requirements and information • continuously monitor the success of a project or task and identify ways to improve

Essential Graduation Learning	Essential Skill (HRSDC)	Employability Skill (Conference Board of Canada)
Technology Competency	Reading Text Document Use Numeracy Writing Thinking Skills Computer Use Continuous Learning Problem Solving Decision Making Finding Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • share information using a range of information and communications technologies (voice, e-mail, computers) • locate, gather, and organize information using appropriate technology and information systems • access, analyse, and apply knowledge and skills from various disciplines (the arts, languages, science, technology, mathematics, social sciences, and the humanities) • observe and record data using appropriate methods, tools, and technology • recognize the human, interpersonal, technical, scientific, and mathematical dimensions of a problem • readily use science, technology, and mathematics as ways to think, gain and share knowledge, solve problems, and make decisions • plan, design, or carry out a project or task from start to finish with well defined objectives and outcomes • select and use appropriate tools and technology for a task or project

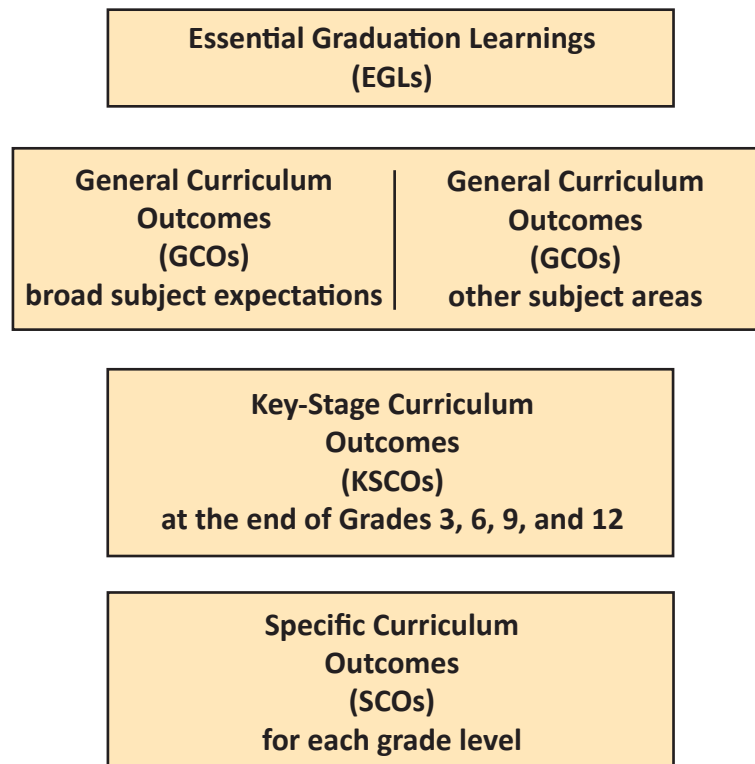
Curriculum Outcomes

Curriculum outcomes are statements articulating what students are expected to know and be able to do in particular subject areas. These outcome statements also describe the knowledge, skills, and attitudes students are expected to demonstrate at the end of certain key stages in their education. These are based upon their cumulative learning experiences at each grade level in the entry-graduation continuum. Through the achievement of curriculum outcomes, students demonstrate the Essential Graduation Learnings.

General Curriculum Outcomes are statements that identify what students are expected to know and be able to do upon completion of study in a curriculum area.

Key-Stage Curriculum Outcomes are statements that identify what students are expected to know and be able to do by the end of Grades 3, 6, 9, and 12, as a result of their cumulative learning experience in a curriculum area.

Specific Curriculum Outcomes are statements identifying what students are expected to know and be able to do at a particular grade level. The specific curriculum outcomes serve as a framework for students to achieve key stage and general curriculum outcomes.



Contexts for Learning and Teaching

Meeting The Needs of All Students

Prince Edward Island curricula is inclusive and is designed to help all students reach their potential through a wide variety of learning experiences. The curricula seeks to provide equal entitlements to learning opportunities for all students.

In recognizing and valuing the diversity of students, teachers must consider ways to

- provide a climate and design learning experiences to affirm the dignity and worth of all learners in the classroom community;
- redress educational disadvantage - for example, as it relates to students living in poverty;
- model the use of inclusive language, attitudes, and actions supportive of all learners;
- adapt classroom organization, instructional strategies, assessment strategies, time, and learning resources to address students' needs and build on their strengths by
 - › providing opportunities for students to work in a variety of learning contexts, including mixed-ability groupings;
 - › identifying and responding appropriately to diversity in students' learning styles;
 - › building upon students' individual levels of knowledge, skills, and attitudes;
 - › designing learning and assessment tasks that correspond to diverse learning styles;
 - › using students' strengths and abilities to motivate and support learning;
 - › offering multiple and varied avenues to learning;
- celebrate the accomplishments of learning tasks by students.

Equity and Inclusive Education

In a supportive learning environment, all students receive equitable access to teachers' assistance, resources, technology, and a range of roles in group activities. It is important that the curriculum reflect the experiences and values of all students and that texts and other learning resources include and reflect the interests, achievements, and perspectives of all students.

Teachers promote equity and inclusion in their classrooms when they

- articulate equally high expectations for all students;
- provide equal opportunity for input and response from all students;
- model gender-fair and inclusive language, and respectful listening in all interactions with students;
- promote critical thinking and challenge discrimination.

Inclusive education is central to the achievement of high-quality education for all learners and the development of more inclusive societies. Inclusion is still thought of in some countries as an approach to serving children with disabilities within general educational settings. Internationally, however, it is increasingly seen more broadly as a reform that supports and welcomes diversity amongst all learners.- UNESCO - Inclusive education: The way of the future, 2008

Nature of the High School Learner

High school adolescent learners usually range in age from 15 to 19. While there may be some general characteristics of adolescent learners at the high school level, it is imperative that each high school learner be recognized as a unique individual. Within any group of students a range of differences in rates and ways of learning, and in experiences and interests are expected and respected. **Unique qualities should be celebrated and built upon.**

Adolescence is a time of increasing autonomy and self-discovery leading to identity formation. There may still be considerable differences in the characteristics of the entry-level high school adolescent and senior high school adolescent. **Teachers will need to consider their students' prior learning and experiences in order to meet the students' needs and interests.**

Senior high adolescents approach their world of diversity and complexity with both enthusiasm and trepidation. They encounter clashes of values, personal conflicts, and social pressures in developing their sense of self. A high degree of students' learning occurs in a social context. The opportunity for collaboration promotes critical thinking and problem solving, stimulates curiosity and imagination, and improves adaptability and analytical thinking. By providing students with a safe, inquiry-based learning environment, teachers can foster the skills of critical analysis, group interaction, and decision-making.

A viable goal for each individual student is to have an equitable opportunity to experience success as he/she works toward the achievement of intended outcomes and a personal best. Improving performance and realizing potential is more important than competition and comparisons to others. The adolescent learner has built a framework which includes tolerance and respect. In senior high, students will seek out questions and develop answers which incorporate more sophisticated reflective practices.

The High School Learner

The High School Learner

- is able to think abstractly and needs fewer concrete examples;
- is concerned about future educational and vocational plans;
- is developing a consciousness of the broader local and global community;
- is less likely to accept the status quo in attempting to attain his/her objectives;
- asserts his/her own ideas about his/her learning;
- enjoys questioning;
- experiences internal and external motivation;
- experiences a desire to take on leadership roles;
- has a deeper capacity for caring and sharing, and for the development of more intimate relationships;
- looks for opportunities for self-expression;
- is more autonomous in his/her decision-making;
- needs to know his/her opinions are welcomed and can be expressed without fear of ridicule;
- needs to understand the purpose and relevance of instructional activities;
- seeks relevance and connection between life outside school and the curriculum;
- values sincere relationships with adults;
- strengthens motor skills and experiences a varying increase in body size and proportion;
- wants to establish immediate and long-term goals.

Valuing Social and Cultural Diversity

In order to engage in and maximize learning, all students need to see their social and cultural identities reflected and affirmed in curriculum and classroom practices.

It is important to recognize that students in Prince Edward Island come from an increasingly wide range of diverse ethnic, racial, cultural, and social backgrounds than in the past. In addition, they communicate with the wider multicultural world through technology, media, travel, and family and business connections in order to understand their own and others' customs, histories, traditions, values, beliefs, and ways of seeing and making sense of the world.

Through experiential learning, interactions with peers from multicultural backgrounds, or by reading, viewing, and discussing authentic texts that reflect diverse social and cultural voices, students from different social and cultural backgrounds can come to understand each other's perspectives, to realize that their own ways of seeing and knowing are not the only ones possible, and to probe the complexities of the ideas and issues they are examining.

Curriculum, classroom practices, and learning resources should reflect the diverse and multicultural nature of our society, examine issues of power and privilege, and challenge stereotypes and discrimination.

Supporting English as an Additional Language (EAL) Learners

Students from language backgrounds other than English add valuable language resources and experiences to the classroom. The language, prior knowledge, and culture of EAL students should be valued, respected, and whenever possible, incorporated into the curriculum. The different linguistic knowledge and experience of EAL students can be used to extend the understanding of linguistic diversity of all students in the class.

The learning environment and organization of the classroom should affirm cultural values to support EAL students and provide opportunities for individual and group learning. While EAL students should work toward achievement of the same curriculum outcomes as other students, they may approach the outcomes differently and may at times be working with alternate learning resources at varied levels within a different time frame than that of other students. **It is especially important for these students to have access to a range of learning experiences, including opportunities to use language for both formal and informal purposes.**

Teachers may need to make explicit the ways in which different forms, styles, and registers of English are used for many different purposes. It is particularly important that EAL students make connections between their learning in English language arts and other curricular areas, and use learning contexts in other subjects to practise, reinforce, and extend their language skills.

Teachers should adapt learning contexts to stimulate and extend the learning of advanced learners, using the continuum of curriculum outcomes to plan challenging experiences. In designing learning tasks, teachers should consider ways students can extend their knowledge bases, thinking processes, learning strategies, self-awareness, and insights.

Advanced Learners

Advanced learners also need significant opportunities to use the general curriculum outcomes framework to design their own learning experiences, which they may undertake individually or with community partners. Project based learning is one example of this type of opportunity.

Advanced learners need experiences working in a variety of grouping arrangements, including partnering, mixed-ability and similar-ability cooperative learning groups, and interest groups.

Engaging All Students

One of the greatest challenges to teachers is engaging students who feel alienated from learning - students who lack confidence in themselves as learners and have a potential that has not yet been realized.

These students need essentially the same opportunities as their peers. Specifically,

- engagement in authentic and worthwhile communication situations;
- time to construct meaning, connect, collaborate, and communicate with each other;
- the opportunity to form essential links between the world of text and their own world;
- developing a sense of ownership of learning and assessment tasks.

They need additional experiences as well - experiences designed to engage them personally and meaningfully, to make their learning pursuits relevant. They need substantial support in reading and writing. They need positive and motivational feedback. They need all of these experiences within purposeful and interactive learning contexts.

Ultimately, the curriculum should prepare students for life after high school.

Preparing students means engaging them with resources and with people from whom they can learn more about themselves and their world. Many students feel insecure about their own general knowledge and are reluctant to take part in class discussions, deferring to their peers who seem more competent.

Through the curriculum, students must find their own voices. The learning environment must be structured in such a way that all students, alongside their peers, develop confidence and gain access to information and to communities - locally and globally.

The greatest challenge in engaging learners is finding an appropriate balance between supporting their needs by structuring opportunities for them to experience success in their individual learning and challenging them to grow as learners. **Teachers need to have high expectations for all students and to clearly articulate these expectations.**

Differentiating Instruction

Differentiated instruction is a teaching philosophy based on the premise that teachers should adapt instruction to student differences. Rather than marching students through the curriculum lockstep, teachers should modify their instruction to meet students' varying readiness levels, learning preferences, and interests. Therefore, the teacher proactively plans a variety of ways to 'get it' and express learning. - Carol Ann Tomlinson.

Curriculum is designed and implemented to provide opportunities for all according to student abilities, needs, and interests. Teachers must be aware and responsive to the diverse range of learners in their classes. Differentiated instruction is a useful tool in addressing this diversity.

Differentiated instruction responds to different readiness levels, abilities, and learning profiles of students. **It involves actively planning for student differences in terms of the core concepts and skills being taught, the process by which the content is delivered, the resources used, and the products that students create.** The learning environment is tailored to the individual needs of the student.

Teachers continuously make decisions about selecting teaching strategies and structuring learning activities to provide all students with a safe place to grow and succeed in a dynamic and personalized space.

Differentiating by Content

Based on the SCOs, the content can be described as the knowledge, skills, and attitudes we want students to develop. Differentiating content requires teachers to pre-assess students. This will identify students who require prerequisite instruction, as well as those who have already mastered the concept and may, therefore move past the instruction and proceed to apply the concepts to problem solving. Another way to differentiate content is to permit an able student to accelerate his/her rate of progress. He/she can work independently on projects to more deeply explore topics under consideration.

Teachers should consider the following examples of differentiating by content:

- Using reading materials such as novels, web sites, and other reference materials at varying reading levels.
- Presenting ideas through auditory, visual, and tactile means.
- Meeting with small groups to re-teach an idea or skill, or to extend the thinking or skills when necessary.

Differentiating the Process

Differentiating the process means varying learning activities or strategies to provide appropriate methods for students to explore and make sense of the concepts. A teacher might assign all students the same product (for example, giving a presentation) but the process students use to create the presentation may differ.

Some students could work in groups and peer critique while others meet with the teacher alone. The same assessment criteria can be used for all students.

Teachers should consider flexible groupings of students such as whole class, small group, or individual instruction. Students can be grouped according to their learning styles, readiness levels, interest areas, and the requirements of the content or activity presented. Groups should be formed for specific purposes, be flexible in composition and short-term in duration.

Teachers should consider the following examples of differentiating by process:

- Using activities in which all learners work with the same learning outcomes, but proceed with different levels of support, challenge, or complexity.
- Providing activities and resources that encourage students to further explore a topic of particular interest to them.
- Providing students with activities that contain work common to the whole class, and that addresses individual needs and interests of learners.
- Offering hands-on activities or other supports for students who need them.
- Varying the length of time a student may take to complete a task in order to provide additional support or to encourage an advanced learner to pursue a topic in greater depth.

Differentiating the Product

Differentiating the product means varying the complexity and/or type of product that students create to demonstrate learning outcomes. Teachers provide a variety of opportunities for students to demonstrate and show evidence of what they have learned. When students have a choice in what the end product can be, they become more engaged in the activity.

Teachers should consider the following examples of differentiating by product:

- Giving students options of how to express their learning (e.g., create an online presentation, write a letter, or develop a mural).
- Using rubrics that match and extend students' varied skill levels.
- Allowing students to work alone or in small groups on their products.
- Encouraging students to create their own product assignments as long as the assignments contain required elements.

Allowing students to choose how they demonstrate their understanding is a powerful way to engage students. It is important to offer students learning activities that are appropriate to their learning needs, readiness, and interests.

Differentiating the Learning Environment

The learning environment includes the physical and affective tone or atmosphere in which teaching and learning take place, and can include the noise level in the room, whether student activities are static or mobile, and how the room is furnished and arranged.

Classrooms may include tables of different shapes and sizes, spots for quiet individual work, and areas for collaboration. Teachers can divide the classroom into sections, create learning centres, or have students work independently or in groups. The structure should allow students to move from whole group, to small group, pairs, and individual learning experiences and support a variety of ways to engage in learning. Teachers should be sensitive and alert to ways in which the classroom environment supports their ability to interact with students.

Teachers should consider the following examples of differentiating the learning environment:

- Ensure that there are places in the room for students to work quietly and without distraction, as well as places that invite student collaboration.
- Provide materials that reflect diversity of student background, interests, and abilities.
- Establish clear guidelines for independent work that matches individual needs.
- Develop routines that allow students to get help when teachers are with other students and cannot provide immediate help.

Project Based Learning

Project Based Learning (PBL) is a teaching and learning methodology in which students engage in a rigorous, extended process of inquiry focused on complex, authentic questions and problems as they achieve the knowledge, skills, and attitudes defined by curriculum outcomes.

A set of learning experiences and tasks guides students in inquiry toward answering a central question, solving a problem, or meeting a challenge, as opposed to several activities tied together under a theme, concept, time period, culture, or geographic area (e.g., the Renaissance, the ocean, World War II, Canada). Throughout the project, students work as independently from the teacher as possible, and have some degree of “voice and choice”.

PBL is unlike traditional projects in the sense that it is informed by the curriculum and drives the instruction and learning, as opposed to involving students in a “fun activity” or “making something”. It is often focused on creating physical artifacts but must involve other intellectually challenging tasks and products focused on research, reading, writing, discussion, investigation, and oral presentation.

Through PBL, students can develop and demonstrate in-depth understanding of academic knowledge and skills while enhancing habits of mind, along with collaboration, critical thinking, and communication skills. PBLs can be interdisciplinary in nature and allow for curriculum integration from different subject areas within one project. This learning experience ends with a high-quality product or performance which is created by the student(s) and presented to a public audience.

Two important components of PBL are the creation of a driving question and the collaboration with a Subject Matter Expert (SME).

The Driving Question

A well-crafted driving question is essential to all effective PBLs. It is this question that will form the basis of explicit links with the curriculum, create the focus of the project for the students, and encourage their process of inquiry and investigation. **All driving questions should be provocative, challenging, open-ended, and complex, and must be linked to the core of what students are to learn as determined by the provincially authorized curriculum.** Sample driving questions might include:

- When is war justified?
- Is watching TV beneficial or harmful to teenagers?
- What effect does population growth have on our society?
- Who are the heroes of our community?
- How can we create a piece of media to demonstrate diversity in our schools?

Students may work in collaborative teams or individually to investigate, research, and refine knowledge and skills to adequately answer the driving question. Because the driving question is open-ended, students are able to reach a variety of potential conclusions in countless ways, while still building in-depth knowledge and skills. This creates the independent nature of the project and also the feeling of “voice and choice” for the students. The teacher then assumes more of a facilitator/coach role, assisting and guiding during an investigation, and providing direct instruction when necessary.

Subject Matter Expert (SME)

A well crafted PBL also includes the role of a Subject Matter Expert, or SME. These individuals/groups play a key role in PBL as they bring first-hand authentic knowledge and experience from the specific content field to the classroom. They may be sought out by the students during their investigation or prearranged by the teacher depending on the project. These experts provide additional support and information to the students related to the topics and help demonstrate to students that the work they are completing is authentic and “real-world”. **The involvement of these experts allows educators to expand the classroom walls and make strong connections and links with surrounding communities or globally.**

At the conclusion of the PBL, students are required to present their findings to a public audience. Their peers in the classroom may act as the dress rehearsal audience for this presentation and provide valuable feedback to refine the presentation. However, in order to “raise the stakes” for the students’ final presentation, students should present their findings to members of the community, experts in the field (including the involved SME), parents, or school administration in addition to presenting to their classroom peers.

Adapted from PBL Starter Kit, (2009) The Buck Institute for Education. (www.bie.org)

Community Based Learning

Community based learning programs encourage the expansion of learning opportunities for primary, elementary, intermediate, and senior high school students by bringing the community into the school and by placing students in the community as part of their studies.

Community based learning is a partnership involving the student, family, school, and community, with each of the partners sharing responsibility for the student’s learning experiences.

Students benefit from the expertise, talent, and resources of community based service organizations, agencies, businesses, industry, citizen groups, entrepreneurs, and parents/guardians. They also gain opportunities to apply and enhance in real-life contexts, the knowledge, skills, and attitudes acquired through their work in the school.

Community based learning enhances students’ personal development, their sense of belonging in their community, and their understanding of community roles and responsibilities.

Community based experiences improve students’ understanding of employment requirements and the links between their future plans and the knowledge, skills, and attitudes they are acquiring in school. Encouraging the local community and businesses to become involved in the classroom helps to extend the learning beyond the classroom walls and provides relevance to the classroom experience.

21st Century Learning

A 21st century curriculum incorporates learning and innovation skills, literacy skills, and life and career skills. These three areas are addressed in context of academic subjects and across interdisciplinary themes. Effective 21st century instruction employs methods that integrate innovative and research-driven teaching strategies, modern learning technologies, and real-world resources and contexts.

Literacy

Students in the 21st century must be skilled consumers of information, critical readers, writers and creators, and critically aware of the world in which they live. Teachers have a major responsibility to develop and support each individual student's capacity to achieve these key understandings. A person's ability to communicate with others and to manipulate texts is intimately linked with the quality of his/her life. Without a solid foundation in literacy, even the ability to articulate thoughts and ideas becomes compromised.

The range of literacies required for success in the 21st century, include, but are not limited to:

- Artistic and Creative Literacy
- Eco-Literacy
- Physical Fitness and Health Literacy
- Globalization and Multi-Cultural Literacy
- Social and Emotional Literacy
- Technology and Multi-Media Literacy
- Financial Literacy
- Numeracy
- Critical Literacy and Problem Solving
- Self Literacy
- Career Literacy
- Information Literacy
- Communication and Collaboration Literacy

Learning and Innovation Skills

Creativity and Innovation

- Developing, implementing, and communicating new ideas to others
- Being open and responsive to new and diverse perspectives

Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

- Understanding the interconnections among systems
- Identifying and asking significant questions that clarify various points of view and lead to better solutions

Communication and Collaboration

- Demonstrating the ability to work effectively with diverse teams
- Assuming shared responsibility for collaborative work

Life and Career Skills

Flexibility & Adaptability

- Ability to adapt to change; to continue to function in a variety of situations

Initiative & Self-Direction

- Working without supervision, completing tasks that are not necessarily assigned but are required to be completed

Social & Cross-Cultural Skills

- The ability to work well with others, being cognizant of cultural mores and differences

Productivity & Accountability

- Completing work assigned in time required, to the skill level required, and taking responsibility for your own actions and work

Leadership & Responsibility

- Being able to enlist the aid of others in completion of a task, and being dependable enough to complete that task

The acquisition of these literacies and skills is important across curriculum areas and should be integrated into teaching, learning, and assessment strategies. Opportunities within the curriculum for integration of these skills exist and should be planned with rich, engaging, experiential activities that support a gradual release of responsibility.

Habits of Mind

Research on thinking and behaviour reveals some identifiable characteristics of effective thinkers. It is not necessarily scientists, artists, mathematicians, or the wealthy who demonstrate these behaviours – they can be found in people in all walks of life.

The following list of habits of mind outlines the common behaviours indicative of the efficient, effective problem solver. They can be included in project outcomes and assessed through self-reflection, journals, discussions, and rubrics.

- Persisting
- Managing Impulsivity
- Listening to Others with Understanding and Empathy
- Thinking Flexibly
- Thinking About our Thinking (Metacognition)
- Striving for Accuracy and Precision
- Questioning and Posing Problems
- Applying Past Knowledge to New Situations
- Thinking and Communicating with Clarity and Precision
- Gathering Data Through All Senses
- Creating, Imagining, and Innovating
- Responding with Wonderment and Awe
- Taking Responsible Risks
- Finding Humour
- Thinking Independently
- Remaining Open to Continuous Learning

For more information on the Habits of Mind, refer to the work of Arthur L. Costa and Bena Kallick:
<http://www.instituteforhabitsofmind.com/>

Education for Sustainable Development

The overall goal of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is to integrate the knowledge, skills, values, and perspectives of sustainable development into all aspects of education and learning.

ESD is based on ideals and principles such as intergenerational equity, social tolerance, human rights, gender equity, health, poverty alleviation, environmental preservation and restoration, natural resource conservation, as well as just and peaceable societies.

It is a complex and evolving concept that requires learners to analyse the key themes from social, cultural, environmental, and economic perspectives, and understand how these factors are interrelated and interdependent.

ESD is not teaching about sustainable development. Rather, ESD involves teaching for sustainable development – helping students develop skills, attitudes, and perspectives to meet their present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

With this in mind, it is important all teachers, make an effort to incorporate ESD themes into their subject areas.

One tool that can be used is the searchable on-line database Resources for Rethinking, found at: <http://r4r.ca/en>

It provides teachers with access to materials that integrate ecological, social, and economic spheres through active, relevant, interdisciplinary learning.

Safety

Students and teachers need to feel safe, both physically and emotionally, in the school setting. In a learning environment where cooperative, active, and collaborative teaching strategies are utilized, students must become knowledgeable of their role in enabling a safe environment to exist.

Being empowered to take ownership for their safety and that of their peers is an essential component of classroom learning. Teachers can provide students with the knowledge required to prevent unnecessary risks in their learning environment. By being educated about the risk factors involved in the classroom setting, students can become active participants in the ownership of their own safety. **In all learning situations, the teacher needs to encourage a positive, responsible student attitude toward safety.**

While physical safety is of utmost importance in the learning environment, emotional safety is equally important. Students need to know what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, and should be encouraged to be active learners without being intimidated by others or engaging in intimidating behaviour themselves.

Risk is involved in everything a person does. To minimize risk, students must become conscious participants in ensuring a healthy, safe learning environment and must avoid complacent attitudes with regards to safety.

Role of Parents and Guardians

Parents and guardians play a fundamental role in the educational focus of the students.

Although parents and guardians may or may not necessarily feel comfortable to help in specific subject learning with their children, their role is a vital link in the development of the students.

It is most important that parents and guardians understand and support school policies. Parents and guardians are an essential component in the facilitation of the learning of student responsibility in such areas as attendance, safe school policies, goal setting, and career investigations. **Schools need parents and guardians to share in their children's successes.**

Teachers should invite opportunities for parents and guardians to discuss these matters. Frequent parent-teacher conferences are encouraged via telecommunications and/or school-based meetings. Involvement in school councils, home and school associations, and/or other school-based organizations enable parents and guardians to play an active role in the educational development of their child.

Parents and guardians may become actively involved as guest speakers in the classroom for students to understand the community in which they live or as spokespeople on particular occupations.

Homework

Student learning improves when homework serves a clear purpose and is matched to both the skills of each individual student and to the curriculum being taught in class.

Homework provides an effective means to model classroom practice. This might involve seeking community input, constructing a model, group discussion to prepare a presentation, or answering questions for assessment purposes.

Homework is an essential component of a program as it extends the opportunity to think and reflect on ideas investigated during class time. Meaningful homework experiences can allow the students to learn self-discipline and team responsibility while acquiring a sense of self-worth. Teachers use their professional judgment to assign homework as a means of exploration, reinforcement, assessment, and/or further investigation.

Homework is another channel for parents and guardians to be involved. It is a tool for parents and guardians to understand the focus of their child's education in a specific subject area. In some cases, it opens the opportunity for parents and guardians to become actively involved in the education process.

Outcomes and Achievement Indicators

Specific Curriculum Outcomes (SCOs)

Specific Curriculum Outcomes state the intended outcomes of instruction, and identify what students are expected to know and be able to do within a particular grade and subject area of study.

The learning expected of students in PEI is defined by SCOs for each area of study within each grade. As PEI students achieve the grade and subject-specific outcomes identified in curricula, they will deepen their understanding of each area of study as a living field of knowledge.

All SCOs within a grade and subject area of study are compulsory.

SCOs provide the goals or targets of instruction in terms of measurable or observable student performance. SCOs provide a focus for instruction and provide a basis for the assessment of student achievement. SCOs are observable, assessable, and supported by achievement indicators that help to define the breadth and depth of the outcome. The outcome of learning described in each SCO provides the basis for selecting learning and teaching strategies. SCOs contribute to the achievement of the KSCOs and provide a continuum of learning from entry through Grade 12. **In short, SCOs describe the intended outcomes of instruction in performance terms without restricting the means of achieving them.**

Although schools have the responsibility to ensure that all SCOs in a curriculum document are met, schools have flexibility in determining how the delivery of instruction and assessment for, as, and of learning can best take place. Instruction, assessment, evaluation, and reporting with respect to these SCOs are dependent on the professional judgment and experience of teachers, guided by provincial and/or board policy.

Achievement Indicators

Achievement indicators, taken together as a set, define the specific level of attitudes demonstrated, skills applied, or knowledge acquired by the student in relation to the corresponding SCO.

The set of achievement indicators provided for an SCO

- provides the intent (depth and breadth) of the outcome;
- tells the story, or creates a picture, of the outcome;
- defines the level and types of knowledge intended by the outcome;
- is not a mandatory checklist, prioritized list of instructional activities, or prescribed assessment items.

When teachers are planning for instruction, they must be aware of the set of achievement indicators in order to fully understand the breadth and depth of the outcome.

Based on their resulting understanding of the outcome, teachers may add to the existing achievement indicators to support the intent of the outcome and to be responsive to their students' interests, lives, and prior learning. It is important to note, if additional achievement indicators are developed or if given achievement indicators are substituted, they must be reflective of and consistent with the breadth and depth that is defined by the given achievement indicators.

Teachers determine which achievement indicators are most relevant at a particular time (e.g., developmental stage, time of the year, relevant circumstance) by analysing the needs and interests of the student – what s/he already knows, understands, and is able to do.

Lists of achievement indicators will begin with the phrase, “Students who have achieved this outcome should be able to...”

Working With Curriculum Outcomes

In order to fully understand an SCO, it is important to understand how the learning is representative of both the knowledge and cognitive process dimensions.

The **Knowledge Dimension** classifies four types of knowledge learners may be expected to acquire or construct, ranging from concrete to abstract.

Factual

The basic elements students must know to be acquainted with a discipline or solve problems:

- knowledge of terminology (e.g., technical vocabulary)
- knowledge of specific details and elements (e.g., major natural resources)

Conceptual

The interrelationship among the basic elements within a larger structure that enables them to function together:

- knowledge of classifications and categories (e.g., periods of geological time)
- knowledge of principles and generalizations (e.g., Pythagorean theorem)
- knowledge of theories, models, and structures (e.g., structure of government)

Procedural

How to do something, methods of inquiry, and criteria for using skills algorithms, techniques, and methods:

- knowledge of subject-specific skills and algorithms (e.g., skills used in painting with watercolors)
- knowledge of subject-specific techniques and methods (e.g., interviewing techniques)
- knowledge of criteria for determining when to use appropriate procedures (e.g., criteria used to judge the feasibility of using a particular method to estimate business costs)

Metacognitive

Knowledge of cognition in general as well as awareness and knowledge of one's own cognition:

- strategic knowledge (e.g., knowledge of outlining as a means of capturing the structure of a unit of subject matter in a textbook)
- knowledge about cognitive tasks, including appropriate contextual and conditional knowledge (e.g., knowledge of the cognitive demands of different tasks)
- self-knowledge (e.g., awareness of one's own knowledge level)

The **Cognitive Process Dimension** represents a continuum of increasing cognitive complexity, from lower order thinking skills to higher order thinking skills. The *verb* that begins an SCO represents the cognitive process dimension.

Remember

Retrieve relevant knowledge from long-term memory.

- Define...
- Describe...
- Identify...
- Label...
- Name...
- Quote...
- Recall...
- Recognize...
- Repeat...

Understand

Construct meaning from instructional messages, including oral, written, and graphic communication.

- Associate...
- Classify...
- Compare...
- Compute...
- Defend...
- Distinguish...
- Explain...
- Infer...
- Interpret...
- Paraphrase...
- Characterize...
- Summarize...

Apply

Carry out or use a procedure in a given situation.

- Apply...
- Demonstrate...
- Dramatize...
- Execute...
- Illustrate...
- Implement...
- Perform...
- Practise...
- Prepare...
- Produce...
- Use...
- Model...

Analyse

Break material into constituent parts and determine how parts relate to one another and to an overall structure or purpose.

- Analyse...
- Categorize...
- Correlate...
- Diagnose...
- Differentiate...
- Discriminate...
- Attribute...
- Distinguish...
- Examine...
- Infer...
- Organize...
- Relate...

Evaluate

Make judgments based on criteria and standards.

- Appraise...
- Argue...
- Assess...
- Check...
- Conclude...
- Critique...
- Defend...
- Estimate...
- Evaluate...
- Justify...
- Predict...
- Rank...

Create

Put elements together to form a coherent or functional whole; reorganize elements into a new pattern or structure.

- Compose...
- Construct...
- Create...
- Design...
- Develop...
- Generate...
- Improvise...
- Invent...
- Plan...
- Produce...

Teaching Strategies

Learning theory research clearly indicates that teachers need to employ a wide variety of instructional strategies to address the learning styles of all learners. Moreover, the nature of certain content or processes can only be taught effectively if specific instructional strategies are employed. In order to achieve this objective, students must have an opportunity to cooperatively brainstorm, discuss, evaluate information, and make informed decisions. Students often point to experiential activities as the best part of a program as they have the chance to work cooperatively and be actively involved in the learning process.

Teachers are ultimately responsible for determining the best teaching methods for their students, the best way of grouping them, and the best way to present material to make it relevant and interesting. Exemplary teachers use a variety of instructional strategies and have the flexibility to call upon several different strategies both within one period and during a unit of study. Adolescent learners need a balance between practical work, listening, discussing, and problem-solving.

Indirect instruction involves inquiry, induction, problem-solving, decision-making and discovery. It is mainly student-centred and is used to generate alternatives and solve problems. The teacher acts as facilitator, supporter, and resource person, while the student is highly involved observing, investigating, and inferring information from data or forming hypotheses.

Interactive instruction relies heavily on discussion and sharing among participants. For the teacher it involves management and organizational skills to set up the activities which may involve a variety of group structures. The teacher must observe the students in action and have good record keeping methods. The students will learn from peers and the teacher through interactions with both.

Direct instruction is highly teacher-directed consisting of lectures, explicit teaching, and demonstrations. It is effective for providing information and developing step-by-step skills.

Independent study includes the range of instructional strategies which are intended to develop individual student initiative, self reliance, self-improvement, and responsibility for self-learning.

Assessment

The terms “assessment” and “evaluation” are often used interchangeably which is incorrect. Although they are inherently connected, each term refers to a different stage of the overall evaluative process.

Assessment and evaluation are integral components of the teaching-learning cycle.

Effectively planned assessment and evaluation promotes learning, builds confidence, and develops students’ understanding of themselves as learners. Effectively planned assessment and evaluation also improves and guides future instruction and learning.

Assessment and evaluation are continuous activities that are planned for and derived from SCOs, and are consistent with the instructional learning strategies. The depth and breadth of each SCO, as defined by the achievement indicators, informs teachers of the skills, processes, and understandings that should be assessed.

Effective and authentic assessment and evaluation involves

- designing performance tasks that align with specific curriculum outcomes;
- including students in determining how their learning will be demonstrated;
- planning for the three phases of assessment (for, as, and of) and evaluation.

Assessments need to be reflective of the cognitive processes and level(s) of knowledge indicated by the outcome. An authentic assessment will only collect data at the level for which it is designed.

Assessment is the act of gathering information on an ongoing basis in order to understand an individual student’s learning and needs. It is the journey of his or her learning.

Effective assessment improves the quality of learning and teaching. It can help teachers to monitor and focus their instruction, and help students to become self-reflective and to feel in control of their own learning. When students are given opportunities to demonstrate what they know and what they can do with that knowledge, optimal performance can be realized.

Assessment has three interrelated purposes:

1. Assessment **for** learning to guide and inform instruction.
2. Assessment **as** learning to involve students in self-assessment and setting goals for their own learning.
3. Assessment **of** learning to make judgments about student performance in relation to curriculum outcomes.

Even though each of the three purposes of assessment requires a different role and planning for teachers, the information gathered through any one purpose is beneficial and contributes to an overall picture of an individual student’s achievement.

Effective Assessment Strategies

All assessment practices should respect the needs of diverse learners in classrooms and should respect and appreciate learners' cultural diversity. Teachers should provide students with a variety of ways to demonstrate on an ongoing basis what they know and are able to do with many different types of assessments over time. Valuable information about students can be gained through conversations, observations, and products. A balance among these three sources ensures reliable and valid assessment of student learning.

Effective Assessment Strategies

- are explicit and communicated to students and parents so students know expectations and criteria to be used to determine the level of achievement;
- must be valid in that they measure what they intend to measure;
- must be reliable in that they consistently achieve the same results when used again, or similar results with a similar group of students;
- involve students in the co-construction, interpretation, and reporting of assessments by incorporating their interests, multiple intelligences, and their learning styles;
- reflect where the students are in terms of learning and help to determine the levels and types of support or instruction that will follow;
- allow for relevant, descriptive, and supportive feedback that gives students clear directions for improvement, and engage students in metacognitive self-assessment and goal setting that can increase their success as learners;
- are fair in terms of the students' background or circumstances and provide all students with the opportunity to demonstrate the extent and depth of their learning;
- accommodate the diverse needs of students with exceptionalities, including students with individual learning plans;
- assist teachers in selecting appropriate instruction and intervention strategies to promote the gradual release of responsibility;
- are appropriate for the learning activities used, the purposes of instruction, and the needs and experiences of the students;
- are comprehensive and enable all students to have diverse and multiple opportunities to demonstrate their learning consistently, independently, and in a range of contexts in everyday instruction.

Students should know what they are expected to learn as designated by SCOs, and the criteria that will be used to determine the quality of their achievement.

This information allows students to make informed choices about the most effective ways to demonstrate what they know and are able to do. **It is important that students participate actively in assessment by co-creating criteria and standards which can be used to make judgments about their own learning.** To get an idea of some possible criteria, students may benefit from examining various scoring criteria, rubrics, and student exemplars. Assessment must provide opportunities for students to reflect on their progress, evaluate their learning, and set goals for future learning.

Teachers can involve students in the assessment process by using the following suggestions:

- Incorporate students' interests into assessment tasks (for example, allowing students to select texts to read/view that relate to their interests).
- Provide opportunities for students to self-assess their learning.
- Co-create assessment criteria with the student, working to describe how a specific skill or product is judged to be successful.
- Use student exemplars to illustrate a range of skill development (so students can use them to compare to their own work, or practise using the assessment criteria that would be used for their own activities).

Students are more likely to perceive learning as its own reward when they have opportunities to assess their own progress. Rather than asking teachers, "What do you want?" students should be asking themselves questions such as, "What have I learned? What can I do now that I couldn't do before? What do I need to learn next?"

Formative Assessment - Assessment *for* and *as* Learning

Assessment for learning involves frequent interactive assessments designed to make student understanding visible so as to enable teachers to identify learning needs and adjust teaching accordingly.

Students learn from assessment when the teacher provides specific, detailed feedback and direction to guide learning. Feedback for learning is part of the teaching process. It is the vital link between the teacher's assessment of a student's learning and the action following that assessment. **To be useful, feedback needs to be immediate and must identify the way forward.** Descriptive feedback makes explicit connections between student thinking and the learning that is expected, providing the student with manageable next steps and exemplars of student work. It gives recognition for achievement and growth and includes clear direction for improvement.

Assessment *for* learning

- requires the collection of data from a range of assessments to find out as much as possible about what students know and can do, and in order to plan for future instruction, to identify student needs that still must be addressed;
- uses SCOs as reference points, along with exemplars and achievement indicators that differentiate quality;
- provides descriptive, specific, and instructive feedback to students and parents regarding the next stage of learning;
- allows for judgments about students' progress for reporting purposes;
- provides information on student performance that can be shared with parents/guardians, school and board staff, and other educational professionals.

Assessment *as* learning actively involves students' reflection on their learning, and monitoring of their own progress.

Student-driven, and supported with teacher guidance, assessment as learning focuses on the role of the student as the critical connector between assessment and learning, thereby developing and supporting metacognition in students.

The goal in assessment as learning is for students, with teacher support and guidance, to acquire the skills needed to be metacognitively aware of their increasing independence as they take responsibility for learning and constructing meaning.

Through self-assessment, students think about what they have learned and what they have not yet learned, and decide how to best improve their achievement.

Learning is enhanced when students see the effects of what they have tried and can envision alternative strategies to understand the material. Students need feedback to help them develop autonomy and competence. Feedback as learning challenges ideas, introduces additional information, offers alternative interpretations, and creates conditions for self-reflection and review of ideas.

Assessment *as* learning

- focuses on students as they monitor what they are learning and use what they discover to make adjustments, adaptations, or changes in their thinking so as to achieve deeper understanding;
- supports students in critically analysing their learning as it relates to learning outcomes;
- prompts students to consider how they can continue to improve their learning;
- enables students to use collected information to make adaptations to their learning processes and to develop new understandings.

Summative Assessment – Assessment *of* learning

Assessment of learning involves strategies designed to confirm what students know, demonstrate whether or not they have met curriculum outcomes or the goals of their individual learning plans, or certify proficiency and make decisions about their future learning needs.

Assessment of learning occurs at the end of a learning experience that contributes directly to reported results. Used in conjunction with assessment for and assessment as learning, assessment of learning is strengthened. Because the consequences of assessment of learning are often far reaching, **teachers have the responsibility to report student learning accurately and fairly, based on evidence obtained from a variety of contexts and applications.**

Because assessment of learning comes most often at the end of a learning experience, feedback to students has a less obvious effect on student learning than feedback for learning or as learning. Students do, however, rely on their marks and on teachers' comments as indicators of their level of achievement, and to make decisions about their future learning endeavours.

Assessment *of* learning

- confirms what students know and can do;
- occurs at the end of a learning experience, using a variety of tools;
- provides opportunities to report to parents/guardians, school and board staff, and other educational professionals evidence to date of student achievement relative to SCOs;
- provides a foundation for discussions on student placement or promotion.

Evaluation

Evaluation is the culminating act of interpreting the information gathered through relevant and appropriate assessments for the purpose of making decisions or judgments, often at reporting time.

Inherent in the idea of evaluating is “value.” **Evaluation should be based on the range of SCOs, which should be clearly understood by learners before teaching and evaluation takes place.** The quality of student work is judged on the basis of defined criteria of quality – in this case, the specific SCOs and related achievement indicators. The evaluation process is informed by quality assessments.

During evaluation, the teacher

- interprets the assessment information and makes judgments about student progress;
- makes decisions about student learning programs based on the judgments or evaluations;
- reports on progress to students, parents, and appropriate school personnel.

Upon completion of evaluation, the teacher reflects on the appropriateness of the assessment techniques used to evaluate student achievement of the SCOs. Such reflection assists the teacher in making decisions concerning improvements or modifications to subsequent teaching, assessment, and evaluation.

Curriculum Guide Organization

Peer Helping Curriculum Outcomes Overview

Students will be expected to

UNIT 1: Learning Challenges and Supports

Students will be expected to

- SCO 1:** Analyse the impact of individual learning aptitudes and preferences on learning.
- SCO 2: PHP501A** Analyse opportunities for growth involving the learning challenges of peer(s).
- SCO 2: PHP601A** Evaluate the effectiveness of strategies to motivate and support others in their learning.
- SCO 3:** Analyse inclusion and inclusive practices.

UNIT 2: Protocol and Responsibility

Students will be expected to

- SCO 4:** Analyse the role of peer helpers in promoting respect for diversity within the school community.
- SCO 5:** Model exemplary practices in accordance with the *Peer Helping Ethics and Confidentiality Statement*.
- SCO 6:** Model exemplary behaviours in accordance with the *Peer Helping Attendance and Behaviour Contract*.

UNIT 3: Personal Development and Leadership

Students will be expected to

- SCO 7:** Demonstrate strong leadership qualities in their role as a peer helper.
- SCO 8:** Demonstrate empathetic qualities while working with student(s) in a peer helping role.
- SCO 9:** Evaluate the effectiveness of their critical thinking and problem solving strategies in their role as a peer helper.
- SCO 10:** Evaluate their personal growth.

The Cognitive Process Dimensions

		Cognitive Process					
		Remembering (recalling information) LOWER ORDER THINKING	Understanding (constructing meaning, explaining ideas or concepts)	Applying (using ideas and concepts to solve problems)	Analysing (breaking information into parts to explore understanding, relationships, and overall structure)	Evaluating (justifying a decision or course of action based on criteria and standards)	Creating (generating new ideas, products, ways of viewing things, or structures) HIGHER ORDER THINKING
Knowledge Dimension	Factual Knowledge (essential facts, terms, details, elements)						
	Conceptual Knowledge (principles, generalizations, theories, models)						
	Procedural Knowledge (methods of inquiry, skills, techniques, strategies)			SCO 5 SCO 6 SCO 7 SCO 8	SCO 2 (501A) SCO 3 SCO 4	SCO 2 (601A) SCO 9	
	Metacognitive Knowledge (awareness of own thinking and processes)				SCO 1	SCO 10	

**PHP
501A-601A**

Table of Specifications

Curriculum Topics	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	% of Curriculum
Learning Challenges and Supports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual learning aptitudes and preferences • Learning challenges and supports • Inclusion and inclusive practices 		SCO 1 SCO 2 (501A) SCO 3	SCO 2 (601A)	30%
Protocol and Responsibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect for diversity • Ethics and confidentiality • Responsibility and behaviour 		SCO 4 SCO 5 SCO 6		35%
Personal Development and Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership skills • Empathetic qualities • Critical thinking and problem solving • Reflecting on personal growth 		SCO 7 SCO 8	SCO 9 SCO 10	35%

UNIT 1:

Learning Challenges and Supports

Peer Helping

PHP501A-601A

1

	Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Analysing	Evaluating	Creating
Factual						
Conceptual						
Procedural						
Metacognitive				SCO 1		

Learning Challenges and Supports

SCO 1

Students will be expected to...

Analyse the impact of individual learning aptitudes and preferences on learning.

Achievement Indicators

Students who have achieved this outcome should be able to

- 1.1 Recognize that all individuals approach learning in a unique way
- 1.2 Distinguish among methods of categorizing individual learning aptitudes and preferences
- 1.3 Explain why the use of teaching/support strategies based only on learning preferences may not challenge students and improve learning
- 1.4 Identify learning aptitudes and preferences of students they assist (i.e., through consultation with the student, Peer Helping teacher, classroom teacher)
- 1.5 Practice a variety of multi-sensory learning techniques to assist peers (e.g., using flash cards, images, reflection, videos, oral reading, manipulatives, role playing, technology)
- 1.6 Analyse the potential impacts of multi-sensory techniques to support student learning in various subject areas and classroom environments
- 1.7 Relate individual learning aptitudes and preferences to types of instructional practices, student engagement, and student success
- 1.8 Analyse their personal learning aptitudes and preferences based on knowledge gained through self-assessment

Elaboration

Focus Questions:

How might individual learning aptitudes, learning preferences, and instructional practices potentially impact student learning?

What methods can I use to help others learn more effectively?

Peer Helping teachers can often provide details about the strengths and learning preferences of student(s) who are being assisted by the peer helper. The classroom teacher and the students themselves can provide more context for this information. To assist peer helpers in identifying approaches that can support their work with other students, the teacher might explain effective learning and study techniques such as finding a quiet place to study, re-phrasing questions, reviewing notes often, using mobile apps, educational gaming, or taking short quizzes online to reinforce learning. Teachers could lead peer helpers in activities to present course content in ways that involve the senses and discuss the effects this approach may have on learning. It will be important for peer helpers to be aware of a variety of multi-sensory instructional methods in order to fully appreciate and be responsive to individual preferences and approaches to learning.

Students could be introduced to Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences (e.g., linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalistic), as well as Neil Fleming's model based on visual, auditory, and kinesthetic/tactile learning modes. Although research does not indicate that student learning improves if material is presented according to their areas of strength, it is still helpful to be aware that people have individual preferences in terms of how they like information to be presented and how they respond to various sensory information. Students should not be labelled as "visual learners" or "auditory learners", for example, since it is widely known that individual learning preferences are a mix of these attributes, and labelling tends to be a limiting factor in many regards. It is beneficial to provide a variety of learning experiences for students using all the senses, whenever possible.

Students should be made aware that learning aptitudes and preferences may have impacted how well someone has developed skills in a particular area of learning. For example, specific tasks such as note-taking abilities may have been hindered by a student's preference for auditory learning, just as listening skills may not be quite as well developed in students who favour learning by doing (kinesthetic). This does not mean that other skills cannot be developed – it simply means the student may need more support to develop them and the peer helper may have to be creative in the methods chosen to present material and support new learning.

Peer helpers should recognize that using a variety of instructional practices can improve the ability of students to learn. Along with presenting material in ways that use the senses, approaches might include integration of technology, group work, direct instruction, and experiential learning. Other aspects of the classroom environment, such as noise level or visual distractions may also be challenging for some students and may need special attention. Based on all this information and their knowledge of the students with whom they work, peer helpers could develop a plan of action to augment the teacher's instructional strategies with supports that focus on the use of other senses. For example, if a teacher is explaining material and using slideshows with mainly text (auditory, with minimal visual cues), the peer helper might try to develop a related activity to review the content that includes some movement, manipulatives, images, or music.

Peer helpers should also be asked to consider how learning aptitudes and preferences might affect their own learning. By completing self-assessments, peer helpers can identify their own strengths and tendencies to prefer certain ways of learning. A measure of understanding is required for students to apply this knowledge to their own learning and to determine which methods work best for them as individuals. Knowledge gained throughout this self-reflective process will also assist peer helpers in selecting appropriate strategies to help students with whom they work.

Throughout the semester, peer helpers can continue to build their repertoire of techniques for supporting learning. They can collaborate with other peer helpers, and share their successes and challenges through discussions at block meetings, demonstrations, logbooks, reflections, and other means.

Peer Helping

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(*NOTE: Peer Helping students may be required to practise specific motivational strategies, depending on their particular peer helping assignment and the needs of the students with whom they work. Such techniques should be initiated and closely monitored by the peer helping teacher and classroom teacher.)

Learning Challenges and Supports

SCO 2 PHP501A

Students will be expected to...

Analyse opportunities for growth involving the learning challenges of peer(s).

Achievement Indicators

Students who have achieved this outcome should be able to

- 2.1 Collect information related to learning challenges from a range of sources (e.g., articles, websites, discussions with others, provincial training)
- 2.2 Identify a variety of challenges to learning (e.g., motivation, anxiety, learning disabilities, distractions, wellness)
- 2.3 Explain the characteristics of various specific learning disabilities (e.g., dyslexia, ADHD, autism)
- 2.4 List historical and current well-known people who have or are thought to have had a learning disability
- 2.5 Analyse how personal challenges can impact student learning
- 2.6 Analyse how specific learning disabilities can impact student learning, both positively and negatively (e.g., improved problem-solving or visual-spatial skills, increased originality or creativity, difficulty reading or interpreting text, difficulty communicating)
- 2.7 Examine strategies to reduce effects of external factors on learning
- 2.8 Examine a variety of growth opportunities for students with learning challenges
- 2.9 Apply – with teacher support – their knowledge of learning challenges to assist peer(s)

SCO 2 PHP601A

Students will be expected to...

Evaluate the effectiveness of strategies to motivate and support others in their learning.

- 2.1 Review a range of information sources related to learning challenges
- 2.2 Summarize the factors and characteristics associated with a variety of learning challenges
- 2.3 Analyse how personal challenges can impact student learning
- 2.4 Analyse how specific learning disabilities can impact student learning, both positively and negatively
- 2.5 Research how peer and teacher support may impact specific learning challenges
- 2.6 Compare strategies and practices that may assist in motivating students
- 2.7 Examine a variety of growth opportunities for students who face learning challenges
- 2.8 Apply – with teacher support – their knowledge of specific learning challenges to assist peer(s)
- 2.9 Initiate – with teacher support – strategies to reduce the effects of external factors on peer(s)' learning
- 2.10 Reflect on the impact of strategies used to motivate and support student learning, and – with teacher support – adjust where necessary

2

	Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Analysing	Evaluating	Creating
Factual						
Conceptual						
Procedural				SCO 2 - 501	SCO 2 - 601	
Metacognitive						

Elaboration

Focus Questions:

How can students translate knowledge of learning challenges into success in school and in life?

How can effective encouragement and motivational techniques promote student learning?

As a peer helper, what should I do if a student(s) continue to be disengaged in their learning?

Everyone learns in differently ways, and learning may be affected by internal and external factors. Aside from diagnosed learning disabilities, learning challenges can also include such things as reading and writing comprehension problems, time management, wellness, and motivation. Students may also face more specific challenges like test anxiety, difficulty in taking notes, or inability to sustain concentration during reading and note taking.

Students should be exposed to terms that identify specific learning disabilities, including conditions such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, central auditory processing disorder, attention deficit disorder, dyscalculia, and Autism spectrum disorder through their participation in the Provincial Peer Helper Training Day and pre-placement learning at their school. Along with learning about the characteristics of each learning disability, students should be given opportunities to explore the uniqueness, gifts, and opportunities for growth related to specific conditions. It may help to have students explore historical and current high profile figures who have or are thought to have had a learning disability (e.g., Albert Einstein, Winston Churchill, Agatha Christie, Leonardo da Vinci, other innovators, engineers, entrepreneurs, entertainers, or sports figures).

In order to incorporate a wide range of perspectives on learning challenges, students should examine a range of potential barriers to learning and investigate various types of information (e.g., print, broadcast, online) from many different sources (e.g., advocacy networks, special interest groups, government agencies). This knowledge should inform peer helpers' identification of potential growth opportunities for the students they assist.

Peer helpers should be aware that external factors within a learning environment (e.g., lighting, noise, distractions) may also contribute to the challenges faced by students, and that each individual's experiences related to environmental factors is quite unique.

Students should also recognize encouragement as one means to reinforce desired behaviour and redirect negative or inappropriate behaviour. Students should be aware that immediate feedback is a necessary factor for success, and that assisting students to understand routines and expectations is often an effective means of avoiding negative behaviours. Students should be introduced to effective strategies that will help them motivate other students to learn, some of which include positive reinforcement, proximity, redirection, and encouragement. Students should also be aware that specific strategies are often linked with particular learning difficulties. This material should be presented in such a way that students will understand that their work as a peer helper must always reflect a caring and supportive approach and be in line with goals of the learner, the classroom teacher and the peer helping teacher. Demonstrated achievement of this outcome will include the ability of students to apply their knowledge of learning challenges to their individual peer helping situations.

Peer helpers at the 601 level are expected to have a deeper understanding of the impact that they might personally have on other students who are managing learning challenges, which is based on their research of current articles and data. Students could convey this knowledge by researching this topic and sharing their findings through a slideshow, case study, written response, discussion during a block meeting, or an individual conference with the teacher. Further learning could be demonstrated by developing a student-generated project involving activities such as teaching part of a class, or creating a review game using the Smart Board, while ensuring that each facet of the activity is achievable for the student with a particular disability. This learning could also be shown by having peer helpers work with the classroom and peer helping teachers to develop strategies to support a particular student who is experiencing difficulties.

Particularly at the 601 level, students should be given opportunities to reflect on and refine their practices throughout the semester.

Peer Helping

PHP501A-601A

Learning Challenges and Supports

	Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Analyzing	Evaluating	Creating
Factual						
Conceptual						
Procedural				SCO 3		
Metacognitive						

SCO 3

Students will be expected to...

Analyse inclusion and inclusive practices.

Achievement Indicators

Students who have achieved this outcome should be able to

- 3.1 Define inclusion
- 3.2 Recognize inclusive practices
- 3.3 Explain how practices of differentiation and modification are different
- 3.4 Examine inclusionary practices in schools and/or communities (e.g., current practices and policies, how policies have changed over time, opinions related to inclusionary practices)
- 3.5 Analyse the benefits and challenges of inclusion in the classroom
- 3.6 Examine assistive technologies as tools to support and facilitate student learning and inclusion

Elaboration

Focus Questions:

How do teachers alter their teaching to meet different students' needs?

How do inclusive practices contribute to student learning?

How can technology help students with learning disabilities?

Depending on student needs, inclusive practices can include utilization of techniques to support differentiated learning, modification, and creation of an Individual Education Plan (IEP) including access to assistive technology, a variety of instructional methods, or – in some cases – educational assistants. Each in its own way, these strategies promote diversity and multiple learning styles while providing additional learning support.

Students should know that modifications are very different from differentiated instruction. They should understand that a modified curriculum indicates that curriculum outcomes are changed for a particular student. In contrast, adaptations and differentiated instruction are about varying how information is presented or how evaluations are conducted and do not change the intended specific curriculum outcomes.

Students could investigate local inclusion policies and discover how those that practices work in a larger community. Discussions with the peer helping teacher and other peer helpers at block meetings may reveal different approaches, challenges, and benefits to inclusion within the school community.

Students should be provided with opportunities to view and utilize various assistive technologies such as Kurzweil, Dragon Naturally Speaking, and the many applications now available for mobile devices. Students may discover creative uses for these technologies in relation to the work they do as peer helpers.

UNIT 2:

Protocol and Responsibility

Peer Helping

PHP501A-601A

4

	Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Analysing	Evaluating	Creating
Factual						
Conceptual						
Procedural				SCO 4		
Metacognitive						

Protocol and Responsibility

SCO 4

Students will be expected to...

Analyse the role of peer helpers in promoting respect for diversity within the school community.

Achievement Indicators

Students who have achieved this outcome should be able to

- 4.1 Explain a range of concepts associated with diversity (e.g., culture, learning abilities, socio-economic background)
- 4.2 Discuss how students can demonstrate respect for diversity in the classroom and in the school as a whole
- 4.3 Examine various perspectives on the concept of diversity within the school community (e.g., interview a teacher or administrator, discuss with peers, collect a series of short video clips from a variety of people)
- 4.4 Examine the challenges diversity may present to learning
- 4.5 Demonstrate respect and acceptance of others
- 4.6 Analyse the potential impact of peer helpers and other student leaders on attitudes toward diversity in a school community

Elaboration

Focus Questions:

What are the strengths and challenges presented in a diverse student population?

How do individual and collective perceptions of diversity affect students who have learning challenges?

How can a peer helper promote respect for diversity in the school community as a whole?

To build on their understanding of diversity acquired through previous social studies curriculum outcomes and individual experiences, students should be re-introduced to a variety of topics often associated with the concept (e.g., culture, religion, ethnicity, languages spoken, learning culture, learning abilities, gender identity, socio-economic background). Observations and discussions about diversity within the school community and the larger community can provide context for their learning in this area.

In meeting this outcome, students should examine how distinctiveness of learning, emotional, or social factors could be considered forms of diversity, and possible challenges and opportunities presented by this way of thinking. Students could discuss how our differences enhance our experiences as a society. Students may also discuss attitudes about poverty and its potential effects on learning.

Examining diversity might include identifying potential challenges for English as an Additional Language (EAL) students who are learning in an environment that may be significantly different than they have previously experienced. Student-led discussions involving language and cultural diversity could be the focus of a block meeting.

Students might then concentrate on identifying methods which may help to counter negative attitudes around diversity, such as increased education about various learning, social, and emotional challenges. They should also consider how peer helpers can potentially be positive influences on others in a school community by showing respect for all individuals they encounter.

Peer Helping students are expected to work as a collaborative group during weekly or bi-weekly block meetings with the Peer Helping teacher to learn about acceptance and respect, and apply this learning to specific situations in their class work. Students should explore the impact of respect and acceptance on student learning, personal relationships, school community, and personal growth.

Evidence of meeting outcome expectations may be demonstrated through daily interactions with others, and through oral and/or written reflections about learning. Students may also demonstrate their achievement of this outcome by implementing a classroom project and/or school initiative that promotes respect and acceptance of others. Projects could be specifically designed to create awareness in the school or community about a particular topic related to respect.

Peer Helping

PHP501A-601A

5

	Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Analysing	Evaluating	Creating
Factual						
Conceptual						
Procedural			SCO 5			
Metacognitive						

Protocol and Responsibility

SCO 5

Students will be expected to...

Model exemplary practices in accordance with the *Peer Helping Ethics and Confidentiality Statement*.

Achievement Indicators

Students who have achieved this outcome should be able to

- 5.1 Define ethics
- 5.2 Examine fundamental values and principles of ethics
- 5.3 Examine attributes and behaviours associated with ethical practices
- 5.4 Identify ethical issues that may arise in relation to their peer helping role
- 5.5 Explain the importance of ethical behaviour and consequences for unethical behaviour
- 5.6 Examine the importance of confidentiality their role as a peer helper
- 5.7 Identify potential issues related to confidentiality that may arise in their role as a peer helper
- 5.8 Explain scenarios where confidentiality may be broken in the best interest of the student(s)
- 5.9 Agree to consistently follow the terms outlined for peer helper ethical and confidentiality practices by signing a contract
- 5.10 Demonstrate positive attributes and appropriate behaviours in specific contexts (e.g., related to confidentiality, ethics, potential influence on others)
- 5.11 Reflect on situations requiring ethical behaviour and confidentiality in their role as a peer helper

Elaboration

Focus Questions:

As a peer helper, how am I perceived by other students?

What types of information must a peer helper keep confidential?

What are some potential situations where divulging personal information about other students is absolutely essential?

How does one reconcile a conflict of values and the importance of communication?

The concepts of ethics and confidentiality will often determine the appropriateness of actions for peer helpers in specific situations. In arriving at a definition of ethics, students should consider concepts such as the rightness or wrongness of actions, motives which may promote particular behaviours, how personal beliefs may influence the perceived effects of behaviour on others, and the positive or negative consequences of actions.

Block meeting discussions and provincial peer helper training activities can reinforce students' understanding of values and principles related to ethics (e.g., respect, fairness, confidentiality, dignity, compassion, balancing what is right with the privacy of others). Students should be aware of some specific attributes and actions (e.g., trustworthiness, honesty, effective communication, professional discretion) that are often associated with ethical behaviour. Journal reflections may give the teacher more insight into each student's understanding of these concepts.

Students are expected to display ethical behaviour and practise confidentiality in specific contexts (e.g., classroom discussions, scenario examinations, role plays, day to day work as a peer helper). Peer helpers should understand that they are in a position of trust, which requires keeping a measure of distance between themselves and the student(s) with whom they work.

Peer helpers are in a unique situation, often having more privileges and responsibilities than other students, as well as potentially being role models and/or confidants, so it is vital for them to respect the potential impact their actions may have on others. Students should be made aware that personal information provided by peers they are assisting or divulged by other peer helpers at block meetings is considered confidential. Techniques such as use of initials instead of full names and use of hypothetical situations in communication with teachers will ensure confidentiality. Peer helpers will be required to sign a Peer Helping Confidentiality Statement and adhere to guidelines and expectations outlined in it.

While students must understand that great care must be taken to guard the personal information of other students, they must also realize that there are specific instances where information must be shared with teachers or other professionals in the best interests of the students involved (e.g., in the case of alleged abuse, illegal or dangerous behaviour, or indications of a potential suicide attempt). Peer helpers should also be informed that teachers, school counsellors, and other professionals are required by law to report instances of child abuse and potential risk for suicide.

As with other outcomes for this course, ethics and confidentiality are vital throughout the time a student is a peer helper and beyond. The expectation is that any personal information about students who are being assisted must remain confidential indefinitely although the semester and course will end.

Peer Helping

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Protocol and Responsibility

6

	Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Analysing	Evaluating	Creating
Factual						
Conceptual						
Procedural			SCO 6			
Metacognitive						

SCO 6

Students will be expected to...

Model exemplary behaviours in accordance with the *Peer Helping Attendance and Behaviour Contract*.

Achievement Indicators

Students who have achieved this outcome should be able to

- 6.1 Interpret the guidelines of the *Peer Helping Attendance and Behaviour Contract*
- 6.2 Agree to consistently follow peer helper guidelines, by signing the contract
- 6.3 Participate, as appropriate in provincial peer helper training
- 6.4 Follow accepted peer helper protocol, including
 - › having excellent punctuality and attendance
 - › participating actively in block meetings
 - › showing respect for others and for the role of a peer helper, both inside and outside the classroom
 - › exhibiting a positive attitude
 - › following the school’s code of conduct
- 6.5 Reflect on the appropriateness of their actions and behaviours in their role as peer helper, both within and outside the classroom

Elaboration

Focus Questions:

How does my behaviour, both in and outside the classroom affect others?

How and why are expectations for peer helpers more intensive than for other students?

By signing the *Peer Helping Attendance and Behaviour Contract*, students agree to behave in an exemplary fashion both within and outside the classroom environment. Students will be required to apply knowledge gained in provincial peer helper training, readings, and block meetings to their individual situations throughout their work as a peer helper. As stated in previous outcomes, students are also required to respond with patience, show empathy, model respect, and follow guidelines for ethics and confidentiality.

In order to fully meet this outcome, students should apply their knowledge to their actions within and outside the school setting, recognizing themselves as a role model for others. Students who fail to honour the contract may be asked to leave the program. Attendance at provincial peer helper training is compulsory for all peer helpers, unless the teacher has determined that a particular student has a valid, unavoidable situation or circumstances that prevents their attendance and participation. Excellent attendance in school is also part of the contract signed by students.

Peer helpers at the 601 level should have demonstrated exemplary behaviours and consistent attendance while in Peer Helping 501A. This may be one effective screening mechanism for teachers considering student applicants for PHP601A. These students may also be asked to assume leadership roles at provincial training events, during which time they will be required to model respectful and appropriate behaviour.

UNIT 3:

Personal Development and Leadership

Peer Helping

PHP501A-601A

7

	Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Analysing	Evaluating	Creating
Factual						
Conceptual						
Procedural			SCO 7			
Metacognitive						

Personal Development and Leadership

SCO 7

Students will be expected to...

Demonstrate strong leadership qualities in their role as a peer helper.

Achievement Indicators

Students who have achieved this outcome should be able to

- 7.1 Explain the qualities of effective leaders (e.g., initiative, independence, consistency, strong organizational and communication skills)
- 7.2 Review the main components of effective communication
- 7.3 Identify verbal and non-verbal communication challenges peer helpers may encounter
- 7.4 Recognize the importance of effective communication in their role as a peer helper
- 7.5 Practise the use of inclusive and appropriate language and behaviour inside and outside the classroom
- 7.6 Practise effective communication skills in a variety of situations (e.g., with teachers, while assisting other students, in block meetings)
- 7.7 Manage time and course responsibilities effectively and efficiently
- 7.8 Demonstrate adequate preparation for tasks (e.g., gathering supplies to support peers, coming prepared to block meetings)
- 7.9 Demonstrate initiative in their role as a peer helper (e.g., offering their assistance to peers or classroom teachers, taking action without repeated reminders)
- 7.10 Demonstrate the ability to work independently to assist peers

Elaboration

Focus Questions:

How is a message impacted by more than just words?

How can effective leadership skills impact my success as a peer helper and the student(s) with whom I work?

This outcome builds on skills and knowledge gained throughout their previous school experiences in all subject areas. Students will utilize and develop their leadership skills (e.g., honesty, effective communication, initiative, commitment, creativity) in a variety of ways throughout their work as a peer helper.

Effective communication skills (i.e., reading, writing, viewing, representing, listening, speaking) will be essential in their interactions with classroom teachers, the peer helping teacher, other peer helpers, and students with whom they work. In their role as a peer helper, each student should continue to build and refine their communication skills throughout the semester. Peer helpers should be aware that specific communication deficits may be associated with particular learning challenges, and should be provided with opportunities to develop strategies to help students overcome such obstacles.

As a peer helper, students will be required to manage multiple demands on their time. Development of strong organizational skills will assist individuals in meeting expectations. Peer helpers will need to balance their course work (e.g., scenarios, written reflections, presentations, group assignments, papers, self-assessments) with the tasks associated with assisting other students. Peer helping teachers can help students achieve this balance by having them create a plan for time management which takes into account specific requirements for the course.

A large portion of the time in this course is spent working one-on-one with other students; as a result, peer helpers must show initiative to identify areas where a student may need assistance and provide appropriate supports (e.g., help with note taking, utilize assistive technologies, offer to assist with curriculum-related tasks in the classroom). They must also manage their own learning without daily support and reminders from the peer helping teacher.

Depending on individual circumstances, peer helpers may encounter situations where they may feel compelled to act as an advocate for the students with whom they work, as they will come to know in depth the abilities and preferences of those students. In keeping with the expectations for peer helpers, students should communicate in a respectful way regarding such issues.

Peer helpers at the 601 level are traditionally given additional responsibilities during provincial peer helper training, which may include acting as “table leaders” throughout parts of the day and sharing their advice and learning with new peer helpers. Both activities will require 601 students to take on a leadership role. Prior to training events, teachers should prepare these students through activities such as having them write about what their advice to new peer helpers would be, discuss strategies to motivate others, and review the agenda and expectations for training day. Teachers are encouraged to provide additional opportunities for 601 level peer helpers to build their leadership skills during the course.

Peer Helping

PHP501A-601A

8

	Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Analysing	Evaluating	Creating
Factual						
Conceptual						
Procedural			SCO 8			
Metacognitive						

Personal Development and Leadership

SCO 8

Students will be expected to...

Demonstrate empathetic qualities while working with student(s) in a peer helping role.

Achievement Indicators

Students who have achieved this outcome should be able to

- 8.1 Identify individual learning abilities, challenges, and potential supports
- 8.2 Differentiate between empathy and sympathy
- 8.3 Compare types of empathy (e.g., cognitive, emotional, compassionate)
- 8.4 Identify times when characteristics of empathy have been displayed in a local or global perspective
- 8.5 Respond appropriately with understanding and encouragement to promote student success
- 8.6 Demonstrate the growth and development of empathetic qualities
- 8.7 Reflect on situations where empathy supports the work of a peer helper

Elaboration

Focus Question:

How might empathic qualities shown by a peer helper impact the success of other students?

Students should begin to develop an understanding of empathy by first realizing that it does not mean feeling sorry for someone because of their personal limitations or circumstances in their lives, but that it means having an understanding and appreciation of the challenges faced by that person. Students in this course must be willing to commit to increasing their awareness and development of empathetic qualities with a goal of helping other students succeed.

Types of empathy are often categorized in the following way:

- Cognitive: trying to take on another person's perspective, or see things from their point of view
- Emotional: being aware of and able to identify with another person's emotions in a particular situation
- Compassionate: not only being aware of another's feelings and perspectives, but being motivated to act in a way that will help

In order to increase students' understanding of empathy, teachers could introduce peer helpers, through block meetings, case studies, discussions, and scenarios, to situations in their environment where empathy could play a role. Activities during training day will also give students opportunities to 'take on' specific disabilities for short periods of time, to increase their empathy for others in similar situations.

It will be essential for students to think critically about differing points of view, and the opinions and feelings of others. Paying attention to body language and being alert to changes in mood may enhance the ability of the peer helper to respond appropriately and de-escalate potentially negative situations.

To demonstrate achievement of this outcome, students should develop active listening and observational skills to help them see things from another person's point of view. Students should also display qualities such as being supportive, non-judgmental, trustworthy, perceptive, adaptable, compassionate, and creative in providing support for the students with whom they work. Students could show evidence of their learning and skill development through written and reflective responses, discussions during block meetings, and most definitively through their daily interactions with others.

Peer Helping

PHP501A-601A

9

	Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Analysing	Evaluating	Creating
Factual						
Conceptual						
Procedural					SCO 9	
Metacognitive						

Personal Development and Leadership

SCO 9

Students will be expected to...

Evaluate the effectiveness of their critical thinking and problem solving strategies in their role as a peer helper.

Achievement Indicators

Students who have achieved this outcome should be able to

- 9.1 Identify skills of critical analysis (e.g., questioning, imagining, predicting, comparing, classifying, verifying, identifying relationships and patterns, drawing conclusions, defending a position, reflecting, and reassessing a position)
- 9.2 Discuss the factors involved in critical thinking and problem solving (i.e., effective use of reasoning skills, analysis of parts of the problem, making judgments and decisions, using a process to solve problems)
- 9.3 Use a step-by-step process for solving problems and making decisions
- 9.4 Examine the potential impacts of a variety of factors on critical thinking and problem-solving (e.g., emotions, beliefs, perceptions)
- 9.5 Ask appropriate questions to clarify peer support topics, issues, and situations
- 9.6 Apply problem solving strategies to hypothetical and real-life peer helping scenarios
- 9.7 Consider varying points of view regarding peer support
- 9.8 Define the process of dispute resolution
- 9.9 Respond appropriately to peer helping topics, issues, and/or situations
- 9.10 Reflect on the effectiveness of their specific problem solving strategies

Elaboration

Focus Questions:

What is the impact of critical thinking skills on the effectiveness of a peer helper?

How can I apply problem solving techniques to my peer helping situation?

Throughout pre-placement training, regular block meetings, and daily work as a peer helper, students will be required to apply a variety of critical thinking skills, such as questioning, imagining, experiencing, hypothesizing, inferring, predicting, comparing, classifying, summarizing, drawing conclusions, defending a position, reflecting, and reassessing a position. It is important that students recognize that their own assumptions, biases, emotions, and points of view can potentially impact their responses. Through discussions and block meeting activities, students should appreciate that critical thinking involves applying purposeful thought and reasoning to a situation, and avoiding quick, emotionally charged reactions.

Students will be familiar with problem-solving techniques from the intermediate health curriculum. Peer helpers should be re-introduced to the widely accepted key stages in problem solving (e.g., gathering information, identifying points of view and values, recommending solutions, identifying potential consequences and alternative courses of action, taking action). They should also be exposed to common step-by-step methods of problem solving such as is described in the *Peer Helper's Pocketbook*.

Through role plays, examining scenarios, and participating in discussions during block meetings, students should examine the effectiveness of individual practice (e.g., the relationship between strategy and end result) and the types of skills necessary for effective problem solving. They can also investigate possible alternate strategies and anticipated results by asking questions (e.g., How could this problem have been resolved without much difficulty? What might the results have been?).

Students should be able to demonstrate their learning through logical evidence-based responses to a range of issues, situations, and topics. Their responses to individual situations might include determining the most effective means of engaging a seemingly disengaged student, reacting appropriately to a distraught student, or discussing potential actions applicable to other peer helpers' situations. They should be introduced to skills required for conflict resolution (e.g., reflective listening, exploring alternatives, I messages) and provided with opportunities to practise these skills in response to discussions with other peer helpers and/or hypothetical scenarios presented in block meetings. Students should be aware that they will be expected to request support from, as well as provide support to, other peer helpers in resolving problems and conflict in positive ways.

Students could apply their critical analysis skills through completion of a case study on a peer helping topic, issue, or situation that requires reflection and critical thought. Journal responses and reflection activities will also help to give teachers a sense of the depth at which students are applying their critical thinking skills in various aspects of their role as a peer helper.

Peer Helping

PHP501A-601A

10

	Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Analysing	Evaluating	Creating
Factual						
Conceptual						
Procedural						
Metacognitive					SCO 10	

Personal Development and Leadership

SCO 10

Students will be expected to...

Evaluate their personal growth.

Achievement Indicators

Students who have achieved this outcome should be able to

- 10.1 Identify the skills and qualities needed to provide effective support to peer(s)
- 10.2 Demonstrate the ability to collaborate with and support others in a respectful way
- 10.3 Set goals for personal development (e.g., improving time management, increasing independent learning skills, meeting deadlines)
- 10.4 Apply knowledge, skills, and behaviours gained through peer helper training and experiences to enhance their work with peers
- 10.5 Improve their leadership skills
- 10.6 Implement peer support strategies in a fair, constructive, and respectful way
- 10.7 Analyse the effectiveness of their actions in a peer support role
- 10.8 Analyse the impact of their peer helping experiences on other aspects of their lives
- 10.9 Reflect on their goals, achievements, and personal growth throughout the course

Elaboration

Focus Question:

How have I shown growth in the development of knowledge, skills, and behaviour associated with my role as a peer helper?

Students will be familiar with the concept of personal growth through their work in CEO401A, and previously in the health curriculum. Personal growth is an individual journey and each student will present evidence of learning and development in very different ways. Evidence of personal growth may be shown by setting and achieving goals, reflecting on actions and behaviours, and applying that learning to future situations.

The focus of this outcome is on the growth or development of the students' skills, knowledge, and attitudes over time. Assessment of this outcome should also be based on student achievement as it relates to other outcomes in the course. Development in some key areas should be considered, including

- personal traits or characteristics that contribute to success
- 21st century skills
- content-related skills
- social skills
- leadership and support skills

In order to come to a clear understanding of the level of personal growth attained, each student should be given multiple opportunities to self-assess their skills in a variety of areas over the course of the semester. Periodic self-assessments, peer assessments, and information from the classroom teacher and the peer helping teacher will inform the direction and focus of each student's learning.

Students will identify skills that contribute to their success as a peer helper, and work to improve those skills throughout the course. Students could demonstrate their attainment of a variety of skills and knowledge through activities such as collaboration with other peer helpers, providing one-to-one support to peers, completing reflections and prompts, selecting appropriate strategies to support students with a particular learning disability, and utilizing appropriate assistive technologies. Throughout the semester, students can collect samples of their work and photos to include in their career portfolio.

Peer helpers at the 601 level will be expected to further develop their communication, critical thinking, and leadership skills in specific activities during provincial training. Some of their goals for the semester could revolve around such themes.

