

For the purpose of this report we regard

**Mixed ability** - as a group of students who have been placed randomly in the teaching groups.

**Individualized learning** – students work and learn according to their own ability and pace.

<p>A. Examples of best practice in MAIL in &amp; outside of lessons</p>	<p>All teachers share a common philosophy concerning learning , all students are equal and the teachers role is to facilitate their learning. When asking ourselves what appeared to be the key differences between, say, a British classroom and a Swedish one, we are struck by the calm atmosphere which seemed to exist in all classrooms we observed. So why is this the case and is it crucial to learning that occurs in the school? It could be seen as the starting point, which enables the successful application of an inclusive (heterogeneous groups), mixed ability programme. IL takes place because students are successfully taking responsibility for their own learning.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. In a primary school, we saw daily work/task planning which enabled students to choose tasks, times to carry them out and the pace at which they would work.</li><li>2. The secondary school teachers suggested that differentiation was by outcome. In the primary school, in varying degrees, this was achieved by material and task expectations.</li><li>3. The use of peer support was encouraged in all lesson we observed.</li><li>4. One of the teaching methods observed at the primary school was whole- class participation, where the processes of reasoning was more important than the results. ('There is no right answer')</li><li>5. The teachers at the primary school attempted to develop students self esteem by encouraging them to present their work or findings to the rest of the class, either individually ,in pairs or as groups (students performing sketches in the dining hall).</li><li>6. At both of the schools we were made aware of the formal involvement of parents. Both schools invited feedback from parents in the bi-annual discussions ( teachers, parents and the student) this helps to reinforce IL, and supports the whole school philosophy.</li></ol>
<p>B. Results of comparison &amp; reflection</p>	<p>The education systems in Scandinavia are fairly similar, the equal valuing of each individual and their abilities being at the centre of the learning. The British system focus on results and performance does not put the student at the centre of the learning process. A system has developed where we have some subjects taught in mixed ability groups and others being delivered in sets/ bands ( placed in teaching groups based on their ability), research has shown that this practice can damage a students self esteem.</p>

<p>C. Factors influencing IL in mixed ability groups either + / –</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More effective use of teacher time in that he/she can spend time helping individuals during class work because the lesson has been structured around IL.</li> <li>2. Teacher used a ILP ( Individual learning plan covering the 6 terms work), which has the advantage of allowing continuous improvement and the student and teacher can use it as a tool for structured improvement.</li> <li>3. IL, to be effective, relies, in the opinion of some teachers spoken to, on the material being pitched at the 'middle' ground. It is easily adapted to lower ability students but there is doubt that it can truly stretch the more gifted. (At the secondary school)</li> <li>4. Emphasis on homework in the secondary school helped focus classwork, making it more concentrated.</li> </ol>
<p>D. Aspects concerning the effect of IL on the acquisition of curricular &amp; social competences</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Key to the successful application of IL are activities and lesson plans designed to ensure the acquisition of knowledge and understanding. For example, we saw activities designed to reinforce: communication, social interaction, independent study. These all relied on active rather than passive learning, and contributed to students' confidence with their abilities and in the group; mixed ability group work (secondary school drama activity).</li> </ol>

<p>E. All other aspects, factors, details which will help the conception and testing of modules for teachers &amp; further education at home in your country.</p>	<p>All students seemed to have a sense of belonging, pride and genuinely cared about their school. This was fostered by pictures of the students in class groups, maps showing the close proximity to the school, in classrooms pictures of individual students with their birthdays underneath.</p> <p>The student was regarded, by both schools, as being the centre of the learning process, at the heart of the school.</p> <p>The students responded positively to the teachers and respected their work and opinions; they were confident that the 'teacher knows best.'</p> <p>Students were involved in the planning of their lessons and in their learning throughout the areas we observed. Nonetheless this was more evident in the primary school.</p> <p>The schools' we observed are built on Swedish culture, the infrastructure has been set up by successive governments to create an egalitarian society which the school system reinforces. Throughout the hierarchy of the school everybody experiences a feeling of ownership and this leads to responsible behaviour and attitudes. 'School is fun for all.'</p>
<p>F. Hints for making videos.</p>	<p>Little of what we observed to be effective would be easily videoed for teaching purposes.</p>