



The Scottish Universities Inclusion Group (SUIG)

History of the Scottish Universities Inclusion Group (SUIG)

The Scottish Universities Inclusion Group (SUIG) emerged from a long-standing commitment between Scotland's Initial Teacher Education institutions to meet and share ideas, experiences, research and practice in inclusive education. With the support of Scottish Council of Deans, SUIG (formerly known as the Scottish Teacher Education Committee Inclusion Group), which consists of teacher education course directors and inclusion specialists from each university, developed a Framework for Inclusion, based around the Standards for Registration (GTCS, 2012), to guide the development of inclusive practice. This group has continued to meet via videoconferencing during these challenging times of lockdown. We have revisited the Framework considering the relevance, importance and contribution that inclusive education, and the Framework, can make to the emerging educational landscape. Information on our publications and examples of how the Framework for Inclusion is used in practice can be found on our webpage <http://www.scde.ac.uk/networks/inclusion-group/>. We also have an active Twitter account @SUIG_Scot_Incl

Who are the members of SUIG?

We are a group of course directors and inclusion specialists from the Scottish Universities offering initial teacher education and work in collaboration to ensure that professional learning in inclusive education is embedded in University teacher education programmes.

Our experience ranges from early career researchers through to Professors and a strength of the group is the way in which we support one another to develop as academics. We developed the 'Framework for Inclusion' and continue to encourage creativity in its use in schools and other educational establishments, both here in Scotland and further afield.

Our Aims

We work collaboratively to:

- Ensure that teacher education programmes across Scotland embed inclusion in their initial teacher education courses and support new teachers to understand their professional responsibilities to support the learning of all children.
- Support teachers at all stages in their careers to recognise, value, and respond positively to the diversity of children in schools.
- Support teachers in all stages in their careers to draw from contemporary research-informed understandings of inclusion as they reflect on, and develop their practice.

- Challenge, where appropriate, practices or attitudes that act as barriers to inclusion.
- Undertake research to inform and develop ongoing work relating to inclusion in schools.

We work with other organisations to support the development of our aims. These include the Scottish Government and Dyslexia Scotland. Several SUIG members sit on national committees and working groups including the Scottish Professional Learning Network steering group and Scottish Parliament Dyslexia and Autism working parties. Several SUIG members are founder members of the SERA Inclusive Practice network, with the three convenors all being SUIG members.

Our Activity during 2019/2020

During the academic session 2019/2020, the group has had representation from all the Scottish universities which provide teacher education, and we were delighted to welcome colleagues from Edinburgh Napier and Queen Margaret Universities for the first time. We continue to have at least two representatives from each university, with one being an inclusion specialist and the other a senior colleague in teacher education.

We have continued work on the inclusive mapping research project, with much of the focus of our work here during the academic session being in engaging with and analysing the dataset from across the Scottish initial teacher education courses, with a sub-group having taken the lead in this work and starting to draft a paper to be submitted for publication. We hosted a symposium at the SERA conference in November 2019, raising awareness not only of the research project but the collaborative way in which we work in the Scottish teacher education institutions. We would like to thank SCDE for their continued support for the inclusion mapping research project.

We have continued to respond to national conversations and consultations, including the GTCS Standard consultation in late 2019 and a SUIG member contributed to the Morgan Review consultation. As the COVID-19 pandemic gathered pace in the Spring, our attention turned to ways in which we could offer support to colleagues and to schools, and we have actively sought to offer support through the short-life working groups. A sub-group of members responded to the BERA Small Grants funding call in the summer and while we unfortunately were unsuccessful, our application was short-listed from the large pool of applications made.

Planned Activity during 2020/2021

In the current academic session 2020/2021, we will continue to explore ways in which we can support colleagues in schools and universities in maintaining and extending inclusive practice in the wake of the global pandemic.

Work to complete the inclusive mapping research project will continue, with the paper being submitted to a journal in the Spring.

The BERA Small Grants sub-group are looking to apply for funding elsewhere to allow the research to take place, which will focus on exploring how learning can be inclusive of all Scottish pupils in a post-pandemic world.

We are also beginning to plan for updating the Scottish National Framework for Inclusion in response to the updated GTCS Professional Standards and hope to

carry out this work early in the next academic session once the refreshed Standard is fully operational.

Dianne Cantali,
Chair, Scottish Universities Inclusion Group
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