

Differentiation Guidelines

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ISS

SINGAPORE CAMPUS

Realising Potential



ISS Differentiation Guidelines

Rationale

As an IB World School and a school that believes in inclusion, we believe that differentiation promotes equal access to the curriculum for all learners. Differentiation within the classroom is a relevant and necessary part of every teacher's expertise. We also believe in providing opportunities for students to gain a deep understanding of themselves as learners so that they may reach their maximum potential. 'If, as teachers, we increase our understanding of *who* we teach and *what* we teach, we are more likely to be flexible in *how* we teach' (Tomlinson, Eidson, 2003).

Adapted from: *Learning Diversity in the International Baccalaureate programmes (document)*.

Definition of Differentiation

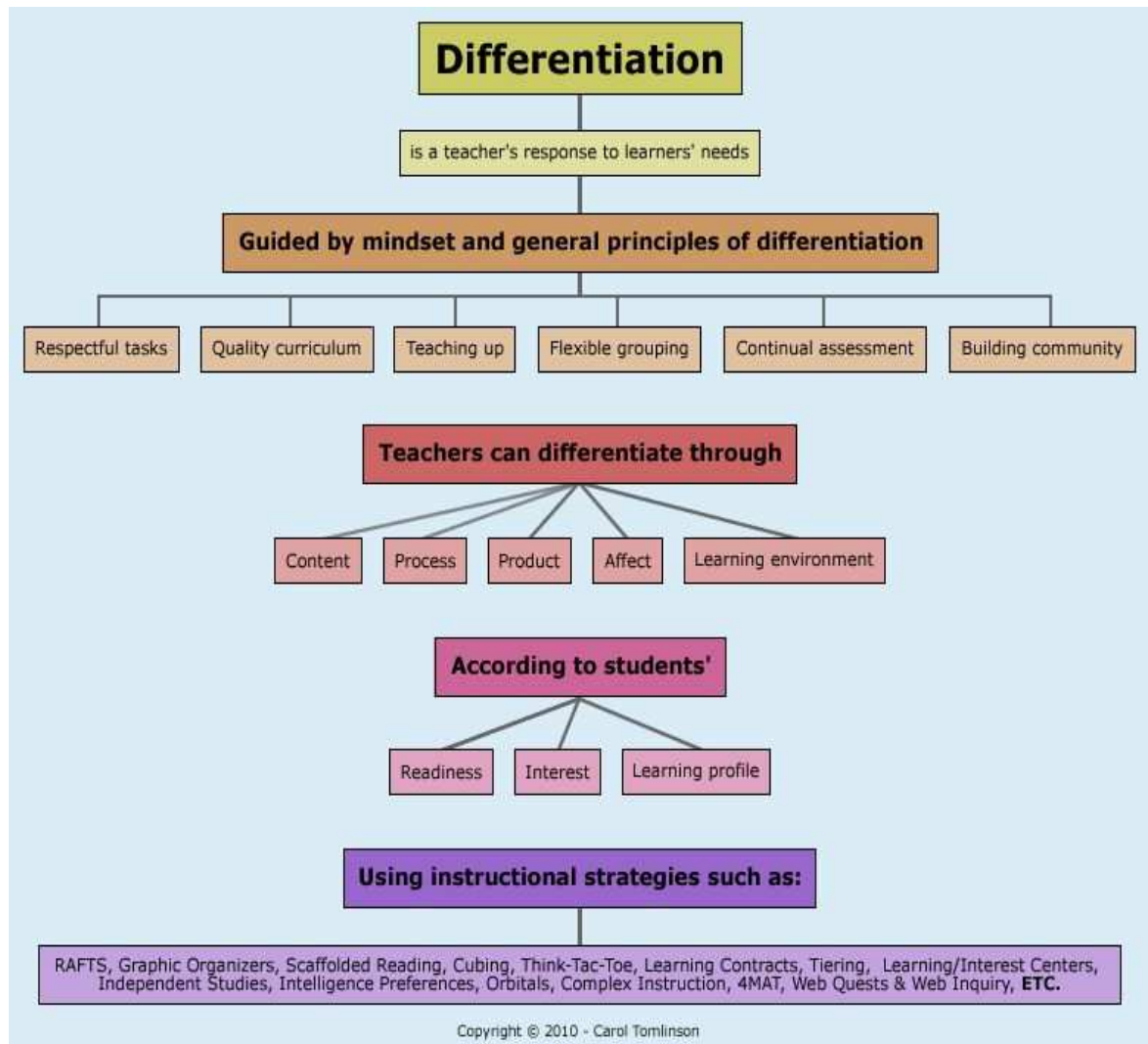
Differentiation is an on-going process including the use of classroom strategies that respond to the strengths, needs and knowledge of individual learners.

Principles of Differentiation

- *The teacher focuses on the essentials:* In a differentiated classroom, teachers develop instruction around the essential knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes.
- *The teacher attends to student differences:* In a differentiated classroom, teachers know students' readiness levels, interest and learning styles.
- *Assessment and instruction are inseparable:* In a differentiated classroom, teachers use assessment to identify learning needs and to help shape instructional strategies.
- *The teacher modifies content, process and products:* In a differentiated classroom, teachers adapt one or more of these based on student characteristics which are readiness levels, interest and learning styles.
- *All students participate in respectful work:* In a differentiated classroom, teachers show respect for learners by honouring both their commonalities and differences and not by treating them alike.
- *The teacher and students collaborate in learning:* In a differentiated classroom, teachers and students plan, set goals, monitor progress, analyse successes and failures and seek to multiply the successes and learn from the failures.
- *The teacher and students work together flexibly:* In a differentiated classroom, the teacher draws on a wide-range of instructional strategies that help him/her focus on individual and small groups, not just the whole class.

Adapted from: *The Differentiated Classroom* (Tomlinson, 1999).

The following diagram outlines a conceptual framework for differentiating instruction:



Roles and Responsibilities

Senior Leadership Team's (SLT) Role:

- Provide ongoing staff development.
- Make available time and coaching as teachers develop differentiated curriculum and instruction.
- Encourage peer collaboration among teachers for planning, carrying out and assessing the effectiveness of differentiated instruction.
- Set expectations for classroom implementation of ideas gained through staff development.
- Make certain that definitions, terms, principles and practices of differentiation are spoken of in common language in all staff development

options as well as observations.

IB Coordinators and Learning Group Leaders:

- Provide an accessible curriculum that recognises the learning needs of all students. This is supported through carefully planned units and programmes of study and schemes of work that reflect differentiation.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of units of study in relations to the students' progress and the learning needs.
- Ensure that the units of study allows students to work at different levels, that students are able to maximize their potential.
- Study the on-going assessment of students and programmes to monitor student achievement.
- Support teachers in the provision of strategies, methodologies and tasks related to differentiation within the classroom.

Classroom Teachers:

- Use a variety of learning environments that will support students in their progression towards independent learning. This includes whole class instruction, independent study, group-work, and pairs. This work is organised based on diverse configurations depending on the task.
- Provide a range of resources with an emphasis on *learning how to learn*.
- Provide a variety of learning tasks that will be matched to the abilities, aptitudes and interests of the class.
- Recognise and demonstrate an understanding of individual student needs through unit planning
- Ensure that the learning needs of all students are catered for.
- Employ a variety of teaching styles that support the variety of different learning styles and levels in the classroom.
- Develop a classroom management system, a physical environment and organisation that supports effective learning for all students.
- Understand the *learning profile* of the student to identify the best learning strategies for them.
- Continually use assessment to inform students of their progress, to set new goals and adapt teaching.

ESL / Learning Support Staff:

- Support classroom teachers in identifying differentiated learning goals for students.
- Provide ideas, strategies, feedback and support for teachers in differentiating the curriculum.
- Promote staff development in the areas of differentiation

(Adapted from Innova Schools Ltd 2009 and *Differentiating Instruction in the Primary Classroom: A Whole School Approach* by C. Colleja.)

Reviewed: August, 2016