



TUTORIAL

Be able to support the teacher in planning learning activities

All teachers plan in advance for the classes they teach and will plan for individuals within the class, differentiating the work according to the pupil's needs.

As a teaching assistant your role is to support the teacher in the planning and delivery of learning activities, and this unit will lead you through the process of learning how to do this effectively. Firstly, let's look at the reasons why a teacher plans lessons. To explain this, I would like you to think about something not related to the classroom – think about a family picnic you may be organising.

If it's to be a success, you'll need to have specific information available to you before you go. The questions you might ask are:

- How many people will be there?
- What time will you start the picnic and how long will it last?
- Where will you hold the picnic?
- What will you provide for people to eat?
- Are there any people going on the picnic who have special dietary needs?
- What games will you play on the picnic?
- What resources will you need for these games?

When you have this information you can plan the event and ensure that you all have a good time together. Now let's transfer these questions to the classroom.

- How many pupils will be in the lesson?
- What time does the lesson start and how long will it last?
- Which room is the lesson in?
- What's the lesson about and are there children in the class with specific needs?
- What activities will take place and what resources will be required?

When you know the answers to these questions, you'll be able to think about how you might support the teacher effectively in both planning and lesson delivery.

Planning shouldn't be ad-hoc or rushed. Although Teaching Assistants are often hourly paid and preparation time isn't always included in their paid employment, it's very important that TAs are able to support the teacher in planning.

In this lesson, we'll explore ways in which this can be achieved successfully and how a learning support practitioner may contribute to the planning, delivery, and review of learning activities.