: An Inclusivity-First Pedagogy for Enterprise Skills: The Impact of a Trauma-Informed Approach to Enterprise Education in Wales (QAA 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7) #ImpactFund

Group Size
Small group (teams of 4-6)
Learning Environment
Special
QAA Enterprise Theme(s)
1Creativity and Innovation 3Decision making supported by critical analysis and judgement 4Implementation of ideas through leadership and management 5Reflection and Action 6Interpersonal Skills 7Communication and Strategy

Objective

To create a trauma-informed enterprise education activity that encourages inclusivity and collaboration, removing the need for differentiation.

The project aimed to design and implement an enterprise learning experience that promotes psychological safety, universal access, and equitable participation, ensuring that all learners can engage meaningfully, regardless of background, ability, or lived experience.

Overview

The project developed The Incident Room, an immersive “cold case” investigation activity designed to build the Welsh Government’s ACRO enterprise skills (Adaptability, Creativity, Resilience, and Organisation). Originally conceived as an escape room, the activity evolved into a trauma-informed investigation experience in response to learner feedback and accessibility challenges. A trauma-informed lens was embedded throughout both design and facilitation, prioritising emotional safety, autonomy, and engagement for all participants. The pilot phase engaged 66 participants (48 learners, 16 staff, and 2 visitors), assessing how trauma-informed principles can enhance enterprise skill development without traditional differentiation.

Activity

Learners worked collaboratively to solve a fictional mystery by analysing clues, questioning assumptions, and connecting evidence. The game was **non-competitive** and focused on **team-based problem-solving**, encouraging reflective dialogue through a structured debrief exploring communication, collaboration, and decision-making processes. Trauma-informed and inclusive design features included:

- Use of **fictional and neutral themes** to avoid triggering content.
- Clear **advance briefing** to build predictability and control.
- **Multiple access formats** (written, audio, visual, tactile) to support diverse learning needs.
- **Facilitator-led scaffolding**, offering emotional and cognitive support without explicit differentiation.

The **facilitator’s role** proved pivotal—balancing psychological safety, engagement, and equity while ensuring that every participant contributed meaningfully.

Skill Development

The activity successfully developed and evidenced the **ACRO enterprise skills**:

- **Adaptability:** Learners coped with ambiguity and responded to evolving information.
- **Creativity:** They generated hypotheses, explored multiple perspectives, and problem-solved collaboratively.
- **Resilience:** Teams demonstrated persistence, managing setbacks and maintaining focus under time pressure.
- **Organisation:** Learners planned strategies, divided tasks, and prioritised evidence efficiently.

Additional skills observed included:

- **Communication and teamwork** through active collaboration and consensus building.
- **Critical and lateral thinking** in analysing clues and forming reasoned conclusions.
- **Reflective practice**, supported through guided post-activity discussions.

Quantitative data showed that:

- 88% of learners identified using problem-solving and teamwork skills.
- 80% recognised use of critical/lateral thinking and communication.
- Emotional safety ratings were high, with only two participants reporting feeling undervalued.

Resources

1. A Best Practice Guide: Creating a Trauma-Informed, Inclusive, Enterprise Education “Incident Room” Activity Without the Need for Differentiation

2. A Best Practice Guide: Embedding Inclusivity and Trauma-Informed Approaches in Enterprise Education

3. Report: Project objective - “Creating a trauma-informed enterprise education activity that fosters inclusivity, removing the need for differentiation.”

4. Trauma-Informed “Incident Room” Booking Form

5. Facilitator Training: Trauma-Informed Approaches in the “Incident Room”

6. Facilitator Welcome Briefing: Facilitator-Led I Before a Trauma-Informed, Inclusive Incident Room Enterprise Activity

7. Facilitator Debrief: Facilitator-Led I Trauma-Informed & Inclusive I Enterprise Skills-Focused

References

1. **Trauma-Informed Education & Practice**

a) Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) (2014).

Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach

→ Introduces the “6 Principles of a Trauma-Informed Approach”

https://ncsacw.acf.hhs.gov/userfiles/files/SAMHSA_Trauma.pdf

b) Brunzell, T., Waters, L., & Stokes, H. (2015).

Teaching with Strengths in Trauma-Affected Students: A New Approach to Healing and

Growth in the Classroom.

Published in the American Journal of Orthopsychiatry.

→ Discusses strength-based, trauma-informed teaching models.

c) Howard, K., & Houghton, C. (2018).

What makes a school trauma-informed?

Australian Childhood Foundation.

→ Offers a practical guide for educators working with students who have experienced

d) ACEHub Wales. (2022).

Trauma-Informed Wales: A societal approach to understanding,

preventing and supporting the impacts of trauma and adversity. Cardiff: Public Health

Wales NHS Trust. → Offers core principles, and a shared language to better prevent,

recognise, and respond to the impact of trauma and adversity.

2. Inclusive Pedagogy & Learning Design

a) CAST (2023).

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Guidelines

→ A flexible framework for creating accessible learning environments that support all

https://udlguidelines.cast.org/

b) Florian, L., & Black-Hawkins, K. (2011).

Exploring Inclusive Pedagogy.

Published in the British Educational Research Journal.

→ Offers practical ways to teach inclusively in group or active learning settings.

c) Department for Education (UK)

Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools

→ Practical requirements for accessibility, inclusion, and anti-discrimination in education.

3. Enterprise & 21st-Century Skills

a) Foundation for Young Australians (FYA) (2017).

The New Work Smarts Report

→ Outlines enterprise skills like problem-solving, communication, digital literacy, and teamwork, with youth-focused data.

https://www.fya.org.au/report/the-new-work-smarts/

b) World Economic Forum (2020).

Future of Jobs Report

→ Describes key skills needed for the future of work (e.g., emotional intelligence, critical thinking, adaptability).

https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-future-of-jobs-report-2020

c) OECD Learning Compass 2030

→ A framework for skills, values, and attitudes essential for student success and well-

https://www.oecd.org/education/2030-project/

4. Simulation, Role-Play & Experiential Learning

a) Kolb, D. A. (1984).

Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development.

→ Core text describing the experiential learning cycle — concrete experience, reflection, conceptualization, and application.

b) Gredler, M. E. (2001).

Designing and Evaluating Games and Simulations: A Process Approach.

→ Framework for building effective, meaningful simulations in education.

c) UNICEF (2019).

Simulation-Based Learning: A Guide for Trainers

→ Outlines inclusive and emotionally safe simulation methods for education and humanitarian training.

https://www.unicef.org/documents/simulation-based-learning-guide-trainers

5. Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Integration

a) CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning)

→ Provides the CASEL 5 Core Competencies: Self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/

b) Jones, S. M., & Kahn, J. (2017).

The Evidence Base for How We Learn: Supporting Students' Social, Emotional, and Academic Development.

Published by The Aspen Institute.

→ Discusses how SEL and inclusive education intersect.

About the Author
This guide was produced by Marion Evans (Bridgend College).

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