

PEDAGOGICAL MEDIATION 4ALL



Instructions to use



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Introduction

The Pedagogical Mediation for an inclusive learning and teaching - instructions for use (with formal and informal learning mediators' Quick Guides)

The aim of the IO3 manual of the international Simpl4All project is to provide a framework and methodology that contributes to inclusive learning. The manual contains the theoretical background that the Consortium considers relevant to the content, as well as information from interviews with self-advocates that we used to create quick guides. The manual aims at different 'learning facilitators' working in formal, non-formal and informal contexts, as well as family members and carers, who will be supported by this manual and the working materials. We focus on education, health and well-being. These issues and concepts play an important role for socially disadvantaged people and/or people with learning difficulties.

This handbook serves as a theoretical building block or basis for learning mediation. This handbook is the result of intensive research into the various subject areas of learning and learning mediation as well as the various target groups. It was supplemented by the development of a questionnaire for self-advocates and the analysis of the results. The analysis was used for individualised quick guides to provide an authentic approach to the topic and the target group.

1. Goals/aims

For young people who are socially disadvantaged and/or have learning difficulties, they are not always able to follow lessons, lose their connection to the community and are much less likely to have positive learning experiences.

To counteract these problems and to strengthen and promote the potentials of each individual, there are various methods and possibilities. We want to create a theoretical approach with our manual and address and reach different target groups with our specially developed guides (quick guides on the use of materials and tools for formal and non-formal learning mediators). For the development of the guides, self-advocates from different sectors were consulted. We want to support the different learning facilitators (all learning facilitators are meant here) working in formal, non-formal and informal contexts.

We refer to active and cooperative learning in the manual and link to the person-centred approach.

2. Terms

Active learning and cooperative learning are often associated in educational literature with people with learning difficulties. This type of learning can be achieved in education and training through the active participation of teachers, learners, families and peers and promotes innovative thinking processes.



Active education and the use of cooperative learning are a way of welcoming and valuing people with learning difficulties. This includes the active involvement of all participants. The role of facilitators (teachers, peers, families, schools) is also considered through combined strategies of individualisation, personalisation, sharing and active participation of learners and peers.

2.1 Active- and Cooperative Learning

Active Learning

Active learning is a teaching approach that focuses on how learners learn, not just what they learn. This approach ensures that they are actively engaged in learning and thus promotes more complex thinking processes. Educators/facilitators/mediators support learners in building knowledge and their own understanding. This method helps to motivate learners and thus achieve greater learning success. As the name suggests, this is Active Learning. There is a topic and the learners actively engage with the topic.

Through this active participation in the learning process, the new knowledge is better memorised. (cf. What active learning is and what are the benefits? | Cambridge).

Active learning refers to teaching techniques and methods that enable learners to participate in learning and teaching activities, to take responsibility for their own learning and to try out new thinking processes. The learner actively participates in learning activities (cf. Active Learning | SpringerLink).

Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is a concept for a form of common learning in which knowledge and skills acquired through exchange and support with other people. Cooperative learning is thus a learning and teaching method based on the principle of learning together. However, it is not classical group work. Cooperative learning goes beyond group work, as all learners take responsibility and make individual contributions (cf. how does cooperative learning succeed? The German school portal: deutsches-schulportal.de).

It is an interaction where the learners acquire skills and knowledge through mutual exchange (cf. Konrad/Traub).

Cooperative learning relies on five elements. Starting with personal interdependence, goals are achieved together; personal success depends on the success of all participants. Personal communication and mutual support, i.e. there is close social interaction with mutual encouragement and support. Everyone in the group has to take personal responsibility. In addition, interpersonal skills are required, i.e. learners not only take on factual tasks but are also responsible for ensuring that the group works together efficiently. The last point refers to reflection on the work, i.e. learners must be able to reflect on the process (cf. Büttner, Warwas, Adl-Amini).



2.2 Peer-Education and Peer-Tutoring

Peer education is a dialogue between peers with the aim of learning something. In most cases, peers discuss and learn about a specific topic. It is about members of a certain group teaching other members of the same group. Participants share information with each other, with one person moderating the discussion. Peer education works well because it is participatory and involves all learners. In recent years, peer education has been used in many areas of public health, e.g. prevention work (Module I Peer Education.doc -unodc.org)

Peer tutoring and cooperative learning rely on similar principles. In cooperative learning, work is done in groups and something is worked on together, whereas in peer tutoring work is mainly done in pairs or (units of) two. The role distribution here is tutor/student; the roles are taken alternately. It is a very good learning process, as tutor and learners actively engage with the content/subject (cf. Büttner et al.).

2.3 Contexts of the terms and areas

In summary, **active** and **cooperative learning** can be appropriate learning methods in all areas of education and training. This combination is particularly suitable for learning different contents. If you combine these teaching and learning methods of peer education/peer tutoring and the person-centred approach, which places the individual at the centre, learning mediation can work well.

3. Person-Centred Work and Approach

3.1 Definition

Why do we link to person-centred approach in this project? Very often, the person is not in the centre and it is not communicated and acted on eye level. This is often noticeable for learners and parents, especially in the school and professional field of work, which is why the person-centred approach in pedagogy is particularly worth emphasising.

The approach of person-centred work originated in English-speaking countries, starting from the 1980s.

The process of personal future planning offers a set of tasks and methods to help us begin a process with people to discover their abilities, discover local possibilities and invent new services that help more than hinder (cf. Beth Mount 1994). This quote describes the process very well.

Carl Rogers developed the person-centred approach. It is a scientific, holistic approach used in psychology, education, medicine, social work and management (cf. Zucconi).

Education is the most important means of preparing generations to become and remain active and constructive members of society. Theorists such as John Dewey, Jean Piaget and



Lev Vygotsky have already addressed the question of how learners learn and have made an important contribution to student-centred learning with their work. The ideas and research of Carl Rogers have also contributed significantly to person-centred education and lifelong learning (cf. Zucconi).

3.2 Relation to Person-Centred Approach

When we talk about person-centred education, it becomes clear how important it is that teachers are more effectively involved in this process. Teachers need to facilitate learning and become active facilitators of learning. To achieve this, they need to be able to create an environment with learners based on trust/respect, empathic understanding and empathy. For C. Rogers, these three operations were very important for the process of person-centred learning. Carl Rogers' approach therefore fits well with this manual on learning mediation. These conditions (or attitudes) are necessary to create a positive learning environment and to achieve effective learning. Learners only feel valued when they feel understood by the teacher.

Person-centred tools are essentially methodologies in education. These tools empower and promote people's wellbeing. Their strengths are seen, rather than difficulties or areas for development. People are supported to build useful networks for their own interests and goals in life. The person-centred approach responds to the needs of each individual, focusing on the uniqueness of the pupil and on their abilities rather than their limitations. In the following contexts, the element of person-centeredness plays an essential role in education and focuses on learning styles, communication, building relationships, finding a role in society and making decisions.

The comparison of person-centred and system-oriented also fits well here to clarify the differences.

Person-centred means talking to the person, system-oriented means talking about the person. Person-centred means planning with the person, system-oriented means planning for the person. Person-centred means strength-oriented, system-oriented means deficit-oriented. Person-centred work seeks joint solutions. Families and society are seen as partners, whereas in system-centred work support systems are created to fit "diagnoses" and solutions are sought to fit the system; family and friends are only marginalised.

Through person-centred work, people gain more control over their own lives and can make decisions according to their own will, the quality of life is improved, support circles are activated. In short, inclusion takes place and active living and learning in the community is possible (Person-centred work, basic workshop, Lebenshilfe 2022).

The theory and perspective already described here, as well as the various pedagogical approaches and approaches, especially those of R. Rogers, explain and describe the topic very well.



Further to the theory, a questionnaire was developed to gain an authentic insight and overview of current learning in formal and non-formal contexts. In order to obtain realistic results, focus groups were formed from the participating partners.

In the following section, however, we want to focus more on the action and inclusion of the approach and have chosen the practical elaboration of the questionnaire, dealing with learning and knowledge transfer for different target groups and is based on the person-centred approach, whereby we have opted for a model by J. O'Brien. The approach and the approach are described in the form of a star.



3.3 Pedagogical approach and the relation to John O'Brien

Following the definition, the reference to this work is established. The person-centred approach is referred to again here.

Person-centred approach is a tool that helps each person define and live the life everyone wants to feel successful and happy. To achieve this goal, this strategy relies on different experiential values that are interlinked.

We refer to the approach of John O'Brien, a Star of Values. John O'Brien's core values aim to focus and guide staff in their work with people with intellectual disabilities. Each value supports an important aspect of the human experience. The "Star of Values" according to John O'Brien (2011) with its five "Experiences of Valuing" forms the basis for belonging to society for every person" (cf. Personenzentriertes Denken – Franziskuswerk Schönbrunn).

These are the experiences that are valued: These are the things we are trying to achieve, we want to support the experience of belonging, this will not happen if people do not actively and consciously participate in community life. We want to help people grow in their abilities and choose their possibilities. This means finding out what the conditions are in which people can develop and exercise their autonomy. We want people to contribute their gifts. This leads us to the question of how we can help people to develop their competences, their particular strengths.

In order to create an exciting and understandable context, the most important categories of John O'Brien, to which we refer, are described below. O'Brien's approach accompanies us throughout the entire handbook, both in the questionnaires and in the evaluation and, building on this, in the quick guides.

John O'Brien is an important author who is particularly committed to the rights of people with disabilities through his person-centred work. He is therefore concerned with social inclusion. For O'Brien, social inclusion means being part of the community. It also means doing things that make up a community and doing things that connect people.

To summarise, social inclusion for O'Brien means the following:

- To be respected
- To share ordinary places
- To contribute
- To choose
- To belong.

The following graphic illustrates this very well:



(Source: John O'Brien, Inclusion Press International & The Marsha Forest Centre, Canada, <http://www.inclusion.com/cdaccomplishments.html>.)

3.3.1 Autonomy and Choosing

For learners, autonomy means the ability to take responsibility for themselves and consciously make their own decisions. Autonomy develops gradually and arises through the interaction of many factors such as attitudes, behaviours and beliefs, but the interaction of all actors also plays an important role here, as do the spatial conditions (cf. Tassinari, 2010).

Taking personal responsibility and making your own decisions means being responsible for your own actions. I make my decisions and these decisions have to do with my goals and wishes. Taking personal responsibility means having control over your own life and strengthens self-confidence. Motivation is intrinsic and means that a person does something because they want to do it. You get an overview, define a goal and recognise your own benefit.

3.3.2 Belonging and Community Participation



We all want to belong. We want to have friends and be liked and we want to have people around us. Belonging is about who we want to be close to and who wants to be around us; in short, it's about personal relationships. It is particularly important to be part of society. Young people need a community and the involvement of the community in order to achieve their goals. They need support, friends, families and others. Young people need to make decisions, and this can be easier in a group. Soft skills are also important to find a place in the community. "And belonging is about personal, not professional relationships". (cfr. Weetman).

3.3.3 Being respected and Valued Social Roles

Being respected is between participating in the community and taking on social roles. It therefore means that social contacts are part of it and that it is important to secure one's place and presence in the community.

Attention, recognition, being taken seriously, trust, understanding and personal responsibility are terms that are associated with respect.

It is important for all people to experience respect and appreciation.

3.3.4 Contributing and Competences

Here we refer to competences: When knowledge is translated into action; ability, skill to solve problems and to do so; learnable skill; prerequisite for action; knowledge, ability, willingness e.g. motivation plays an important role (willingness, curiosity, arousing interest); ability develops through practice/experience (support through repetition, cushioning frustration), knowledge can be taught/learnt (clarity, explaining benefits) (cf. Kompetenz – Dorsch – Lexikon der Psychologie - hogrefe.com).

Important for cooperative learning: "Social skills are essential for successful cooperation. Cooperative learning demands and promotes these in equal measure. These include active listening, compromising, being able to ask for help and resolving conflicts constructively" (Kooperatives Lernen – mehr als bloße Gruppenarbeit – deutsch-klett.de).

You should always ask yourself what is important and necessary for you to be able to apply what you have learnt and what your teacher/mediator needs to know about you so that they can support you in active learning and life.

3.3.5 Sharing Ordinary Places & Community Presence



None of us likes to be locked away, kept away from the real world. These are the ordinary places where belonging and contribution are important to us. We want to be free, not locked away or sidelined (cf. Robert Weetman 1992).

All 5 summarised: The Star of O'Brien represents the following valuable experiences: These are the things we are trying to achieve, we want to support the experience of belonging, this will not happen if people do not actively and consciously participate in community life. We want to support people to grow in their abilities and choose their opportunities. This means that we need to find out what the conditions are for people to develop and exercise their autonomy. We want people to contribute their gifts (cf. 5 Valued Experiences and the 5 Accomplishments - YouTube).

The five dimensions are closely connected.

We become "someone" because we give our gifts or bring something individual to an ordinary place. When we do this, we belong or meet people who become friends or more. Our individual desires or ambitions lead us to be known or to belong somewhere. Our talents and abilities influence our goals and interests (cf. Robert Weetmann 1992).

Based on the work for counselling therapy by Carl Rogers is an approach to social justice and inclusion to support people with learning disabilities. Person-centred work is a tool to support each person to define and live the life that the person would like to live to feel successful and happy. To do this in this work, the strategy is based on different valued experiences that are connected with each other.

In summary, the goal of person-centred work is to protect and nurture the creative abilities that a person possesses and to enhance them through personal experience. Through this process, it is possible to become a part of society. Teachers support learning and participation by promoting effective, democratic and value-based education.

4. Participating Learners:

In this section, the focus is on the participating learners, followed by a description of the self-advocates who discussed together in a focus group. Likewise, the description and structure of the method and the exact content of the survey questionnaire are presented.

The focus is on the participating learners and the learning facilitators who accompany the learners. To this aim, as already mentioned, focus group interviews were conducted with different target groups.



4.1 Composition of the advocacy group

In order to be able to conduct a focus group survey, it was also explained in detail during the preparation of the questionnaire how to form a focus group and a recommendation was given on how to conduct it. Together with the pre-defined questions for the respective target groups, tools for conducting the respective focus groups, which are oriented towards the person-centred approach, were also distributed. In this case sent by e-mail.

A focus group is a moderated group discussion on specific topics. The moderator specifies the main topics. The focus group method is timesaving and brings important insights and an authentic insight into effectiveness in a short time, through natural interaction. It reflects a current situation.

Most of the time, the people participating are like-minded people who have the same story or the same interests or problems. This also increases the willingness to talk more openly about certain topics (cf. Lamnek 2005 & Tausch/Menold 2015).

In order to provide an authentic and complete picture of the thoughts, care should be taken in the composition of the focus group to ensure that the selection of participants is as homogeneous as possible. Both the language level and the interests of the participants should be taken into account. Familiar premises are also an ideal prerequisite.

When selecting the sample, in our case the different target groups, we chose people who are able to provide a lot of information on the questions. We developed discussion questions that could be answered by learners as well as teachers, mediators, trainers and/or family members.

To support this, the questions in the questionnaire were coloured differently to immediately recognise which questions were intended for which target group. Supporting methods from person-centred work were also described, which could be used as support during the interview or discussion.

However, for the evaluation we have defined a catalogue of categories because of which the national report of each participating partnership was carried out. The results are important material for the production of the Simpl4All short guides. The results of this discussion were processed and interpreted according to a kind of content analysis. For this step, the focus was concentrated on certain categories. This grouping makes it possible to obtain useful and authentic material.

The exact procedure of their own focus group is left to the moderators. They can choose the appropriate methods for their interviews depending on the target group and the environment. The way we have presented them in the questionnaire catalogue with supporting methods are only tips and suggestions.



4.2 Description of the advocacy group

The focus groups that participated in this project with their self-advocates **were 64 people** in total. The people involved came from different areas and fields of work. The following is a description of the self-advocates as a diverse target group from the partner countries with different organisations. As the SIMPL4ALL-team is made up of partners and organisations from different European countries with different target groups, an authentic overview is provided here.

The focus group of LebensGroß GmbH was a group of six parents of children and young people with disabilities or learning difficulties. They are parents of children and young people who are very active and involved in their children's learning. The children and young people are in different age categories, from primary school age to graduation or vocational training.

The focus group of Zavod RISA's consists of (young) trainees participating in a two-year vocational training programme. The focus of this programme is on vocational training, which is a kind of short training. During this training, the participants acquire the basic skills they need to pursue a craft occupation or to learn one later. The target group must have completed compulsory primary education for this programme. The participants come from different social backgrounds.

The focus group of EnAIP, the third focus group consisted of coordinators and tutors working in the VET system. They are between 24 and 58 years old and have many years of experience in the educational and socio-educational field. They work in different fields of activity and educational institutions and act as learning facilitators and process facilitators in vocational education and training for learners aged 14 to 19. The learners who participate in these VET programmes come mainly from educationally disadvantaged households, have learning difficulties or a problematic social background.

The focus group of CML conducted two focus group interviews with individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (Asperger's). These participants attend or have attended mainstream school or college. The participants in the focus groups were between 14 and 29 years old.

The focus group of Fondazione Progettoautismo FVG, the fifth organisation involved in the SIMPL4ALL project formed a focus group with 10 parents of young adults with moderate autism. These parents are actively involved in the education of their children. They have first-hand experience of how to support their children in learning and overcoming challenges in different learning environments.

The focus group of the Spanish project partners ITE consisted of nine people, including trained primary and secondary school teachers, head teachers and experts in the field of education.

Moreover, the focus group of Logopsycom works closely with a speech therapy centre in Belgium. Professionals and parents participated in the discussion. The focus group was



composed of professionals working with young adults with learning difficulties and parents of trainees.

4.3 Advocacy group-Questionnaire:

The detailed questionnaire can be found in the appendix or on the website.

The questions developed for the focus group aimed at self-advocacy groups. Two types of questions were developed for this purpose. One set of questions aimed at teachers/mediators/family members/facilitators and the other set of questions aimed at learners/students/pupils. The focus group questionnaire forms the basis for the four guidelines described in the application. The prepared questions can be changed or modified depending on the target group and needs.

Note: Will you find the questionnaire in the annex, on the webpage, or on the project-webpage.

In developing the questionnaire for the self-advocacy groups, we referred to and used elements from John O'Brien's (2011) star development. We use these dimensions of the star to create a questionnaire and categories. As already described in detail in the chapter on person-centred work and the pedagogical approach.



5. RESULTS – 4ALL-Instruction for use

This chapter is titled Results-4ALL. This chapter provides an overview of the results of the focus group survey: The results were used in summarised form for the brief instructions. As mentioned above, what a focus group is and how we organised the focus group for this project. Below you will find the results of the focus group and how we used them for this manual and the quick guides.

As described above, the project relies on inclusive learning, which includes the active participation of teachers, learners, learning facilitators, family members and peers, in all contexts (informal and formal learning situations).

In the appendix to this handbook, you will find short guides on four different topics (target groups). These guides were created based on the material provided by the self-advocates during the focus group interviews.

5.1 Quick Guides

These quick guides are an appendix to the manual "PEDAGOGICAL MEDIATION 4ALL - INSTRUCTIONS for USE". The accessibility of the guide is ensured by simplified language. The sharing and facilitation process between different stakeholders make it an innovative and inclusive tool and ensures the involvement of all. The most important and meaningful results for positive learning mediation follow here.

Each Quick-Guide is developed by each partner organisation for their specific target group.

The guide focuses on the following questions/themes:

- What do families/parents/students/people in general expect from an inclusive and participatory learning mediator/teacher?
- What do families/parents/students/people expect from a mediator/teacher/caregiver to ensure collaborative learning through supported communication, what must the mediator/... be able to do (e.g. interpersonal skills)?
- What is needed to achieve (positive) learning outcomes (learning environment/setting)?

As mentioned in the chapter on setting up focus groups and moderating a discussion, the question categories were presented and here we decided to colour-code the questions for the moderators and the questions for the learners. With the questionnaire for the focus group, we create the basis for the four guidelines described in the application. As already mentioned, the questions can be adapted to the situation and the target groups. There are also instruments from person-centred work.



5.2 Results of the focus groups - Categorisation

For the questionnaire, we organised the categories according to O'Brien's-Star and formulated questions in such a way that they produced representative results in the survey.

By involving self-advocates from different areas and a questionnaire or survey form developed for the different target groups, which follows the core elements of the person-centred approach and includes the essential characteristics of the 5 dimensions of inclusion (O'Brien's Star), it was possible to gain authentic insights into the current situation of learners.

The topics were structured as follows:

- Participation - Common learning situation
- Autonomy - choice
- Learning conditions
- Communication, collaboration and Peer education
- Relevant attitudes and skills
- Methods and tools

By involving self-advocates from different areas and a questionnaire or survey form developed for the different target groups, which follows the core elements of the person-centred approach and includes the essential characteristics of the 5 dimensions of inclusion (O'Brien's Star), it was possible to gain authentic insights into the current situation of learners.

Participation – Common learning situation

The **first** category of the questionnaire is about **participation - common learning**.

It starts with a definition of "common learning". Common learning", according to Article 24 of the UNCRPD, is the right of people with disabilities to inclusive education at all levels and to lifelong learning. In particular, people with learning difficulties or those experiencing social disadvantage often face barriers to learning and participation in society. Many difficulties are due to social isolation and lack of participation. The aim of the initial questions was to find out what their experiences have been and what support they need to actively participate in learning.

Results of the focus group with **families/parents**: For the target group the community participation is particularly important to achieve goals and have positive learning experiences. This includes joint teaching and care as well as joint activities, also outside the educational institution. School and community involvement are also very important for the social-emotional development of learners. Parents see problems and obstacles when participation in the (school) community is not given. Non-participation can lead to social



isolation of learners. Lack of support from the educational institution was also mentioned as a problem. For certain target groups, traditional teaching with traditional learning methods is not always ideal; more flexibility in the design of lessons and materials is needed here.

It was very clear that parents are always actively involved in building and maintaining relationships. They need to and have had to actively work on this.

From the evaluation of **teachers/trainers/mediators (schools)** the following result emerged: Trainers/mediators are active supporters and help in getting to know and building relationships. They need to motivate learners to get and stay in contact with all classmates. To promote inclusion and collaborative learning, they motivate through active and practical provision. As a result, learners make progress and feel respected and more confident. The focus is on individual learning success. Similarly, trust between mediator and learners is of great importance to all involved, and the mediator is actively involved in building this trust. The younger the learners, the better the integration and relationship building. In summary, peer-to-peer collaboration facilitates understanding that can be more complicated for individuals. At the same time, it is helpful to start from real learning situations that are close to oneself in order to bring the learning process closer to the learners' own experiences.

VET - Vocational training: From the focus group, it appears that trainers are very supportive of getting to know each other and building relationships. They try to counter stereotypical behaviour. Curiosity and the desire to adapt enable trainees to take a positive step towards social inclusion and often lead to learning success. Mutual trust and respect between trainers and trainees are also important.

The following results emerged from the focus group discussion with the **peers**: Cooperation in class is particularly important for building relationships. A relaxed atmosphere during group activities, sports, excursions and practical activities is positive for learning together and social participation. In class, respect, praise and recognition are conducive to positive performance and relationship building. It is important that peers are respected and trusted by teachers. Choosing tasks and activities according to interests and abilities is very useful, this motivates and has a positive effect on learning. Communication and networking in this age group is done via social media, email and smartphone, also with teachers. This works well.

Problems and social exclusion were also an issue, here are some examples that can be responsible for this: disruptive behaviour (aggressive behaviour, mobbing, disrespecting rules, physical and verbal violence), learning difficulties.

Autonomy – choice

The **second category** focused on **autonomy and choice**. Autonomy means the learners' ability to take responsibility for themselves and thus make conscious choices. Here the focus was on making choices and the motivation needed to achieve goals.

In the focus group of **family members and parents**, it became clear that appropriate tools and measures need to be provided to increase motivation. This included the creation and



elaboration of individual and personal education plans, learning goals and learning content. Group work is also good for increasing motivation and achieving goals. Learning together is very important and beneficial, and peer learning, the buddy system, has also proven successful here. Learning goals are also awakened by interest and curiosity. Exchange and communication with all participants are also important and enough space must be left for e.g. also sensitivities/everyday sensitivities (of the learners). This requires active engagement of parents and teachers.

From the focus group with the **trainers/mediators/teachers**, it resulted that didactics and methodology are of great importance for the learners. Knowledge therefore needs to be delivered in different ways, depending on the learning needs of the learners. Time management is also important; it is about giving everyone what he or she need to achieve his or her goal. Teaching packages are optimised for the learners. Learning objectives need to be worked on individually and tailored to the learner to increase motivation and achieve the goal.

VET-Vocational training: In vocational qualifications, it is often very difficult to follow a uniform path. In vocational qualifications for people with disabilities or learning difficulties, we analyse and observe what goals the person can achieve. Then we decide which path the person (can) take. It is not so much about motivation, but about what is possible in terms of qualification measures.

In the **peer** focus group, it became clear that a good relationship between trainer and trainee is very important for motivation and achieving the goals. If the trainer knows the persons well, he can assess their strengths and weaknesses, which is helpful for the learning process. The trainer should make the learners feel valued, which in turn promotes self-efficacy and self-confidence. Lessons and materials need to be well structured, with precise instructions and tasks. Working in small groups is an advantage. Practical work should be emphasised, here the trainees see a concrete success (goal) of their efforts.

In summary, all participants agreed that it is important to identify the learners' individual learning goals in order to achieve a real personalisation of learning. It is important that each learner is involved in the design of their learning process in their individual situation.

Learning conditions

This category is about learning conditions (resources such as materials, environment, and teacher/family support) as opposed to barriers and obstacles. Here, all target groups provided the same insights.

Good learning conditions vs. barriers: Barriers and obstacles very often result from a lack of information and communication. Creating an inclusive learning environment is primarily about managing the interaction between creating optimal learning conditions and overcoming barriers. This requires a good range of resources, materials and a well-designed environment that is tailored to the different needs of all sides and all target groups. This



includes visual, auditory and tactile learning materials and modes, technical support and tools, and barrier-free 'access' to all educational content and facilities.

Communication, collaboration and peer education

In the **next category, issues related to communication, collaboration and peer education** were discussed in the focus groups. This section is about belonging and the social roles of learners. It is important for all people to have a place in society, especially in the (learning, working or school) community. Learners of all ages need support and want to be valued. In the focus groups, there were intensive discussions about what constitutes "good practice" for successful communication and what can improve cooperation and exchange among each other. Here, all target groups provided the same insights.

The focus group discussions showed that communication is the basis for effective collaboration between all stakeholders (teachers, carers, family members, supervisors, learners). Communication plays a central role in creating an inclusive learning environment.

Collaborative activities such as projects, group work, group discussions and interactive participation projects promote an inclusive learning environment. Bringing together diverse learners with different abilities leads to better learning outcomes and promotes creative thinking processes.

Relevant attitudes and skills

In the **next category, relevant attitudes and skills** were used to ask what a learning facilitator, mediator should be like, or what makes a "good" teacher, facilitator or mediator.

For all target groups interviewed, it was found that the attitude of the teachers and trainers as well as the educational institution are of great importance.

It is desirable to have a multi-professional team that is well qualified, knowledgeable about the diversity of disabilities and knowledgeable about effective support methods. It is equally important that a 'good teacher/learning facilitator' is authentic, empathetic, patient, supportive, open and patient. Communication should be person-centred, eye-level, appreciative and respectful.

In summary, the profile of a learning facilitator is more than just professional knowledge and technical skills. It requires a mix of attitudes and skills that foster an environment where all learners can succeed with their different abilities. "Good" learning facilitators have a positive attitude, empathy and a basic understanding of diversity.



Methods and tools

The last point of the focus group was about good and proven **methods and tools**, effective learning strategies and which methods contribute to learning success. Here, all focus groups mentioned methods and tools in the discussions that they find most useful or necessary for their target group.

Starting with **families**. What is needed is a multi-professional team with well-qualified teachers, regular and transparent exchange, insight into the learning and teaching situation and, if necessary, immediate individual support from the educational institution. Improved teacher-training, individualised educational plans, increased cooperation between school and home, barrier-free learning environment. The combination of good methods and tools with the characteristics of successful learning paves the way to an inclusive learning journey.

Collaborative learning, digital resources, UDL principles, individualisation, collaboration, growth mind set and empathy create an environment where every participant can experience a meaningful, enjoyable and productive learning journey.

Learning strategies, quality feedback, active recall, methods with explicit instructions, monitoring of learning success. Supporting technologies that can be used well here are correction programmes and other online tools. Methods such as learning from mistakes and celebrating learning progress were also mentioned.

For **trainers/teachers**, the methods of the "flipped classroom", cooperative learning to promote dialogue and exchange, and problem- and project-oriented learning have proven to be well suited. Methods and tools that are oriented towards the interests of the learners have also proven successful.

For **VET**, classic techniques such as individual discussions, group work, and group discussions, mentoring and learning by doing as well as the use of personal skills (communication, empathy, confrontation, relationship skills) have been used.

In the focus group with **the peers**, it became clear that practical and work-related methods work particularly well. Also important are the factors of motivation, time, will and energy to learn, as well as active support from classmates and parents.

Comments that were not considered follow under point 8 of the categories. Here it became very clear that some target groups want to keep special education schools (AT & Spain), also in the area of autism spectrum disorder diagnosis a mainstream school/schooling is not always imaginable.

The surveys show what the various learners and learning facilitators need in order to receive the best possible support in all areas.



6. Summary

Health and well-being play an important role for socially disadvantaged people and young people with intellectual disabilities, including in the context of education and learning. To promote this and strengthen the potential of each individual, there are various methods and possibilities. The Simpl4All project is developing diverse and promising methods and tools that contribute to better participation and communication in education and vocational training.

As we already mentioned, inclusive learning relies on the paradigms of pedagogy of mediation and pedagogical activism. For inclusive learning to be effective, the focus must be actively on change.

Learning is of great importance in education and training and promotes innovative thought processes. This can be achieved through the active participation of teachers, learners, family members and peer groups.

To summarise, this handbook of PEDAGOGICAL MEDIATION 4ALL- INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE is a collection of theoretical principles on the subject of educational mediation. Active education and cooperative learning as well as the person-centred approach are considered throughout. Learning and education are among the most important aspects of human life and the fulfilment of each person's individual potential.

The theory forms the basis of this PEDAGOGICAL MEDIATION 4ALL- INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE and aims at a range of learning facilitators working in formal, non-formal and informal contexts. It also supports family members and key carers of learners. The accessibility of this work is ensured by making the quick guides resulting from it available in a simplified language version and contributing to social inclusion and participation.



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8. Annex:

8.1 Questionnaire - Self-Advocacy Group – Focus group

[SIMPL4ALL Questionnaire Self Advocacy.pdf](#)

8.2 Template REPORT: Self Advocacy

[SIMPL4ALL_TEMPLATE_Report_Self_Advocacy.pdf](#)

8.3 Guides

8.3.1 Peer-to-Peer Mediation

[SIMPL4ALL Quick Guide Peer to Peer.pdf](#)

8.3.2 Mediation Schools

[SIMPL4ALL Quick Guide for Schools.pdf](#)

8.3.3 Mediation in iVET

[SIMPL4ALL Quick Guide iVET.pdf](#)

8.3.4 Guides for families

[SIMPL4ALL Quick Guide for Families.pdf](#)