



Activity 4	UFA qualities for deep learning
Description:	A small group activity which focuses on the learning qualities published by the UFA team in the booklet 'Celebrating Learning'.
Use(s):	To help Fellows engage with the learning qualities, in order to understand them and be able to describe them to others.
Preparation:	Copies of the learning qualities and corresponding explanations for each group. Resources included.

Use 'Celebrating Learning' as the focus for this activity – perhaps read extracts to the group or give them some reading time to absorb it themselves.

A useful overview for Fellows would be: As our own thinking has developed we have begun to pull together a framework for learning in the UFA. This framework will develop and shift over time still further as we refine our own thinking, read more and understand more. The one fundamental which we believe will remain is that deep learning flourishes where relationships are placed at the heart. Building trust, collaboration and respect is at the core of what we do and is likely to remain central to any learning endeavour.

1. In small groups ask the Fellows to match the learning qualities to their definitions/explanations. This is a low level activity – so what do we learn from it? Did everyone have the same approach to it? Were some people goal oriented and focused purely on the matching? Were others more interested in the journey and what they saw on the way? What makes us approach such a task differently to others?
2. Now ask the groups to explore the learning qualities in more depth. For each one ask them to brainstorm along the following lines, as if they were a fly on the wall of some UFA activity:

What might you/young people:

- See?
- Hear?
- Do?

to show each quality 'in action'?

One way of organising this would be to have three groups each with a different focus. E.g. if you were in the 'see' group your discussion would be about what you might observe for each of the learning qualities.

Taking each quality in turn ask each group to feed back their ideas.

Learning to be drawn from this activity

- Sometimes when we try to theorise or analyse we can miss the point. Getting down to describing what you see, hear and do can be much more powerful and perhaps more accurate.

UFA Qualities for Deep Learning – Activity 4
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In creating conditions for deep learning we value the following qualities:

Openness & generosity	<p>I bring my prior experience to trying out and exploring new ideas;</p> <p>I tend to be open to asking questions and can work to build a community of learners that is generous in the sharing of ideas.</p>
Intrinsic enjoyment	<p>I'm enthusiastic, request and want more opportunities and I'm motivated by the learning itself;</p> <p>I can find 'flow' in learning activities.</p>
Application	<p>I can move my knowledge, skills and attitudes forward and actively try to overcome difficulties;</p> <p>I frequently review and rehearse my learning transfer and can use my learning in different contexts.</p>
Disturbance. Challenge. Provocation.	<p>I can shift out of my comfort zone;</p> <p>accept challenges given by others and can both challenge myself and other people; I respond well to positive provocations to my thinking.</p>

Thinking ethically I take responsibility for my own learning and for engaging others in learning;
I believe in the potential of all to achieve success and through dialogue and co-operation I can work for the collective good.

Positive dispositions I have the confidence to keep going, try a range of strategies and ideas, use setbacks to move forward and will tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty;
I have the potential to develop curiosity and enterprise.

Complexity and subtlety I can reflect in many different ways and can apply fast and slow thinking strategies;
I realise that learning can be a 'messy process' and I can embrace the complexity of learning through positive thinking and emotional dispositions.

Being engaged I trust others in the learning process;
I take a sense of satisfaction through seeking understanding;
I draw upon a diverse range of cultures, stories, ideas, knowledge, skills and viewpoints.

Explanations

We are social learners, we learn in a social context. Deep learning requires environments of respect, trust and giving, a willingness to communicate and to be open minded. As apprentice learners we need models. We draw on the expertise of others in an open and generous way. We open ourselves up to different ideas and challenges and are able to move outside our comfort zones.

We are born to learn, but sticking with something requires a connection to a choice that as learners we make for ourselves; we are not just driven by extrinsic rewards. The enjoyment we derive is linked to supportive, reciprocal relationships formed at an early age. We are directed by internal 'antennae' to emotional stimuli and decide to 'let in' those with positive associations. The right balance of motivation, challenge, task demand and skill level will absorb us. An imbalance of these may lead to anxiety or helplessness.

As learners we depend on our memories to make connections. We need to be able to make personal connections with ideas, knowledge and people. We need a safe arena in which to practice new learning and opportunities to practice learning learnt in one setting to another. Thinking tools remain gimmicks to us unless we have the opportunity to test them out in real contexts.

Life and learning is challenging. The UFA Challenge framework enables learners to experience high levels of motivation through meaningful challenges, which require the creation of solutions and the presentation of these solutions to a real audience. Provocations are built in as a feature of such challenges. As learners we need to have difficulty modelled for us and be able to explore strategies for meeting challenges.

We should not attempt to align learners to some preconceived moral purpose or blind them with a vision. We need to model dialogue and enquiry in order to seek wisdom. Ethical and responsible practice is about taking part in an authentic, practical, cooperative activity that seeks shared undertakings but may not reach absolute answers. Learners have a responsibility to commit themselves, to help and include others and to strive for excellence.

A disposition is a long-lasting tendency to act, behave and think in a certain way - a habit that can be worked on rather than an inherited trait. Positive dispositions are a strong indicator of lifetime success (stronger than exam results!). Examples of positive dispositions are the tendency to take risks, be curious, bounce back and be persistent. In order to cope with rapid change it is these positive dispositions which we should be developing.

Succeeding in easy tasks all the time does not build the necessary resilience for coping with a changing world. Being able to problem-solve across social and knowledge contexts and learning from difficult tasks sometimes requires a struggle. In order to be able to cope in such situations requires a perception of control. Those that feel buffeted by difficulties without the personal resources to regain control develop a sense of learned helplessness. A strong 'focus of control' where the learner is able to exert influence over events is linked to greater success in learning.

We cannot listen to others or respect their point of view without authentic engagement. We need to enter into dialogue and draw upon knowledge about differences in experience, culture and background. Learning Teams bring together distributed intelligence and expertise and provide a mutually supportive environment. Peer Tutors within these teams can model and encourage engagement.