

# INTRODUCING CO-CREATION OF THE CURRICULUM WITH LEARNERS WITH SEND IN YOUR SETTING: FIVE KEY STEPS TO GET YOU STARTED

**If you are planning to start co-creating the curriculum with your learners with SEND, there are a number of actions you need to take before you get started.**

## 1. CONSIDER WHETHER YOUR ENVIRONMENT ALREADY SUPPORTS EFFECTIVE CO-CREATION OR WHETHER THERE IS UNDERPINNING WORK TO BE DONE FIRST.

### Co-creation works best when:

- there is an organisational culture that encourages creativity and flexibility in the design and delivery of your curriculum and experimenting with new ways of working
- staff enjoy taking new approaches, are up for a challenge and believe that learners with SEND, with the right support, are capable of making important decision for themselves
- systems for evaluating the effectiveness of new approaches are in place
- there is a strong commitment and creative approaches to learner voice
- person-centred planning processes are established
- the use of RARPA is established.

You might need to discuss with other staff whether these facilitating factors are already in place and if not, whether it would be possible to further develop these before or as part of your co-creation project.

## 2. GAIN SUPPORT FROM MANAGER(S)

If you are a teacher, speak with your head of department/ line manager, perhaps sharing elements of this toolkit. If you are a curriculum manager, then you might discuss your plans with senior managers, such as the person or people responsible for quality assurance and curriculum in your organisation. While you may not need 'permission' to implement a new approach to curriculum development, you will benefit from senior staff understanding what you are trying to achieve and how you plan to go about it.

**You can use the 'Brief introduction for senior managers' presentation in this toolkit to help you do this.**



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### 3. HAVE A PLAN FOR EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR CO-CREATION PROJECT

It is important in any change of practice that you are able to judge whether what you did was effective or not. You don't need to undertake a lengthy evaluation, but you do need to be clear about what you plan to achieve (e.g. improved learner engagement; better attendance; a higher pass rate; greater learner satisfaction) and how you will measure whether or not you have achieved it.

Your findings, if positive, will give you a great basis for extending your project; if not everything has worked out as planned, they will help you improve in your next attempt.

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### 4. INVOLVE THE RIGHT TEACHING AND SUPPORT STAFF AND MAKE SURE THEY UNDERSTAND CO-CREATION

If you are a manager and not planning to undertake the co-creation activity yourself, you need to be sure that you have identified a teacher or teachers

- with good person-centred planning skills
- who are comfortable with a degree of uncertainty
- who like to experiment and want to give co-creation a go
- who have confidence in the ability of learners with SEND to engage in co-creation.

You then need to ensure they have a good grasp of the principles of co-creation and the processes and tools that they could apply. **You can use 'Short introduction for staff' presentation, available within this toolkit, to aid their understanding.** You should also make a commitment to offer the teacher(s) ongoing support as they set about co-creating. It is just as important that you ensure that any support staff also understand the basics of co-creation and how they can help in the process.

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### 5. ENGAGE YOUR LEARNER GROUP

Remember that co-creation is a voluntary activity. Just as you can't really require a teacher to co-create a curriculum, you can't impose co-creation on learners. It needs to be an activity to which both teacher and learners have willingly signed up. You should therefore try to identify a learner group who you think might be up for it and consider how to explain what co-creation means in an accessible and engaging way.

#### Do talk about:

- having a say
- making decisions
- deciding what you want to learn
- choosing how you spend your time

#### Don't talk about:

- being in charge
- writing session plans or schemes of work
- doing the teacher's job for them.

Most learners will be enthusiastic if you present co-creation in a positive way, but be prepared to accept 'no' for an answer if they really don't want to get involved – and test out another group instead.

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