Bridge4Mothers
Training of Trainers (ToT) Personal, Social and Learning-to-Learn (PSL)

MODULE 3 — Gender-Informed Pedagogy

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Co-funded by the European Union

Gender-Informed Pedagogy

Inclusive teaching that recognises learner realities, challenges stereotypes and supports equal participation in VET.

GENDER AWARENESS

Notice how norms, expectations and roles shape learning

EQUITABLE SUPPORT

Remove barriers and adapt participation options

EMPOWERMENT

Build confidence, voice and belonging

Topics Covered

The module connects gender-informed teaching with practical inclusion strategies for VET.

1. What is gender-informed pedagogy?
2. Gender and participation in VET
3. Caregiving and structural inequalities
4. Bias and stereotypes
5. Inclusive communication
6. Equal and equitable participation
7. Representation and visibility
8. Confidence and empowerment
9. Flexible support
10. Gender-informed practice

Learning aim: create safe, fair and empowering learning environments where all learners can participate and progress.

What is Gender-Informed Pedagogy?

Teaching that recognises how gender, care roles and social expectations can affect learning.

Core idea

Aware
Notices how gender norms and expectations influence confidence, voice and participation.

Responsive
Adapts learning tasks, examples and support to learners' realities.

Inclusive
Creates respectful spaces where every learner can contribute safely.

Empowering
Supports learners to build skills, confidence and agency.

Practical approach

Ask
What barriers may affect participation?

Notice
Who speaks, who waits, and who needs more support?

Adapt
Offer different ways to learn, practise and show progress.

Reflect
Review what is working and adjust without judgement.

Gender-informed teaching is not about treating everyone the same; it is about making learning fair and reachable.

Gender and Participation in VET

Participation can be shaped by confidence, time, childcare, stereotypes and previous learning experiences.

Participation barriers

Time pressure
Learners may balance training with work, parenting or household responsibilities.

Confidence gaps
Past exclusion or limited opportunities can affect willingness to speak or try.

Stereotypes
Some sectors or tasks may be seen as “for men” or “for women”.

Access needs
Digital access, transport, language and childcare can influence attendance.

Inclusive actions

Offer choice
Use varied activities: individual, pair, group, written and verbal options.

Share airtime
Use facilitation techniques to ensure all voices are heard.

Normalize learning
Make mistakes part of practice rather than a sign of failure.

Connect to goals
Link learning to real-life, family, community and employment aspirations.

Equitable participation grows when barriers are recognised and learners are supported without stigma.

Caregiving and Structural Inequalities

Learners may face responsibilities and systems that limit time, energy and access to training.

Learner realities

Care work
Childcare, elder care and household tasks can reduce study time.

Financial pressure
Costs, transport and unstable work can make attendance difficult.

Emotional load
Learners may carry stress from family responsibilities or uncertainty.

Limited networks
Some learners lack access to mentors, role models or employment contacts.

Supportive design

Flexible timing
Provide realistic deadlines and options for catching up.

Practical resources
Share templates, checklists and step-by-step guidance.

Clear routines
Make expectations transparent so learners can plan.

Signposting
Connect learners to childcare, counselling, employment or language support where available.

Support is most effective when it addresses both learning needs and life circumstances.

Bias and Stereotypes

Bias can be visible or subtle; both can influence feedback, expectations and learner confidence.

Common patterns

Assumptions
Expecting ability, interest or behaviour based on gender or background.

Language cues
Using examples or humour that reinforces outdated roles.

Unequal feedback
Encouraging some learners more than others, often unintentionally.

Role limits
Assigning tasks in ways that repeat stereotypes.

Interrupt bias

Pause
Check whether an expectation is based on evidence or assumption.

Rotate roles
Share leadership, technical, caring and organisational tasks fairly.

Use evidence
Give feedback based on observable progress and skills.

Invite reflection
Discuss stereotypes as learning material, not as personal blame.

Small changes in language, roles and feedback can create a more respectful and ambitious learning culture.

Inclusive Communication

Communication shapes safety, trust and willingness to participate.

Communication habits

Clear language
Use simple instructions, check understanding and avoid unnecessary jargon.

Respectful tone
Speak with warmth, patience and professional boundaries.

Active listening
Listen for meaning, emotion and practical needs.

Non-judgement
Avoid blaming learners for barriers outside their control.

Inclusive prompts

“What would help?”
Invites learners to name practical support.

“You can try again.”
Frames learning as a process.

“Thank you for sharing.”
Affirms voice and experience.

“Let’s find a way.”
Signals collaboration and problem-solving.

Inclusive communication helps learners feel seen, respected and capable of progress.

Equal and Equitable Participation

Equality gives everyone the same offer; equity adapts support so everyone can realistically take part.

Equal participation

Same access
Everyone receives information, activities and opportunities.

Shared standards
Learning goals are transparent and consistent.

Fair rules
Expectations are applied clearly and respectfully.

Open invitation
All learners are encouraged to participate.

Equitable participation

Flexible routes
Learners can demonstrate progress in different ways.

Targeted support
Additional help is offered where barriers are greater.

Accessible materials
Resources are clear, readable and usable.

Supportive pacing
Learning is paced with realistic time for practice.

Fair learning means combining shared expectations with personalised support.

Representation and Visibility

Learners need to see diverse people, roles and futures reflected in the learning environment.

Why it matters

Belonging
Representation tells learners that their experiences are valued.

Aspiration
Role models expand what learners can imagine for themselves.

Relevance
Examples that connect to everyday life make learning more meaningful.

Respect
Visibility challenges stereotypes and narrow expectations.

Ways to build visibility

Use diverse examples
Show women and men in varied professions, leadership and care roles.

Invite stories
Let learners connect skills to their own experiences.

Highlight progress
Display achievements and strengths in respectful ways.

Review materials
Check images, names, case studies and scenarios for inclusion.

When learners recognise themselves in learning, confidence and motivation can grow.

Confidence and Empowerment

Gender-informed pedagogy supports learners to recognise their voice, skills and choices.

Build confidence by

Starting small
Use manageable tasks that allow early success.

Naming strengths
Help learners see existing skills from family, work and daily life.

Practising safely
Create low-pressure opportunities to try, repeat and improve.

Celebrating progress
Notice improvement, effort and persistence.

Empowerment means

Choice
Learners can make decisions about their learning path.

Voice
Learners can express needs, opinions and boundaries.

Agency
Learners act on goals and solve problems.

Future focus
Learning connects to employment, wellbeing and life plans.

Confidence grows when learners experience respect, success and meaningful control over learning.

Flexible Support

Flexibility helps learners continue even when life circumstances change.

Flexible options

Time
Offer realistic deadlines, catch-up routes and staged tasks.

Place
Where possible, combine classroom, online and self-study options.

Format
Use visual, oral, written and practical learning materials.

Assessment
Allow different ways to demonstrate competence where appropriate.

Keep support structured

Clear pathway
Learners need to know what to do next.

Regular check-ins
Short contact can prevent disengagement.

Shared boundaries
Flexibility works best with clear expectations.

Documentation
Keep resources easy to find and revisit.

Flexible support is not lower expectations; it is a practical route to participation and achievement.

Gender-Informed Practice

A practical cycle for designing, delivering and improving inclusive PSL learning.

Design cycle

1. Analyse
Identify learner needs, barriers and strengths before planning.

2. Design
Choose inclusive examples, flexible activities and clear outcomes.

3. Deliver
Facilitate with respect, active listening and equitable participation.

4. Review
Gather feedback and adjust practice for the next session.

Reflection questions

Participation
Who is contributing and who may need support?

Materials
Do examples reflect diverse lives and futures?

Barriers
What structural barriers can be reduced?

Progress
How are strengths and informal competences recognised?

Gender-informed practice is an ongoing habit: notice, adapt, support and improve.

Gender-Informed Pedagogy Practice Checklist

Use this checklist after each session to strengthen inclusion and support learner confidence.

- [ ] I have considered learners' care responsibilities, time pressure and access needs.
- [ ] I have used inclusive language and avoided stereotypes.
- [ ] I have offered more than one way to participate or complete a task.
- [ ] I have encouraged quieter learners and shared airtime fairly.
- [ ] I have recognised strengths, informal competences and progress.
- [ ] I have reviewed materials for representation and accessibility.

Inclusive practice strengthens learner voice, confidence and opportunity.

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2025-1-DE02-KA210-VET-000359232