

Professional Development Strand

Unit 3: Classroom Management and Administration

Module 3.1 Classroom Management



Student Support Materials

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Unit outline

Unit	#	Modules
Unit 3 Classroom Management and Administration	3.1	Classroom Management
	3.2	Assessment and Evaluation
	3.3	Classroom Administration

Icons



Read or research



Write or summarise



Activity or discussion

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Module 3.1: Classroom Management

Rationale

This module is one of three in a two-credit point unit *Classroom Management and Administration*. The other modules which comprise this unit are

- Module 3.2: Assessment and Evaluation
- Module 3.3 Classroom Administration

The actual break up of topics and time allocation is flexible, and should be decided upon by the individual lecturer.

This module introduces students to classroom management skills that are critical to the development of effective classroom practices and the creation of positive learning environments. Optimal learning is promoted through well organised and administered classroom environments.

Objectives

By the end of this module you will be able to:

- display the necessary skills and strategies to ensure a classroom climate conducive to teaching and learning.
- demonstrate an awareness of the need for classroom routines
- establish clear and workable routines which provide students with a framework in which to behave and operate
- recognise the importance of explaining, modelling, rehearsing, prompting and reminding students about each routine
- Consider common classroom management problems (eg discipline) and discuss ways of preventing them,.
- Incorporate the use of positive discipline, the recognition and reinforcement of student achievement, as well as strategies for dealing with unacceptable behaviour.
- Demonstrate an awareness of relevant national and school policies relating to management and discipline.
- Recognise and cater for different types of classroom management required for:
 - Group management
 - Management of multigrade classes
 - Management of students with special needs
 - Equitable gender considerations

How to use this material

This module is written as a series of topics, identified in the table of contents, and by their large sub headings. Each topic includes some readings, and activities to complete. Your lecturer will guide you through the materials during the lecture program. Sometimes, you may work directly from the book during the lectures. Sometimes, your lecturer may ask you to complete an activity or reading for homework. Your lecturer may include additional information and topics.

Assessment

Your lecturer will provide details of assessment requirements during the first week of lectures. These assessment tasks will provide the opportunity for you to show your understanding and in some cases, apply your knowledge of the theory to practical situations.

References

Whilst all the readings required are contained in these resource materials, additional references used in the writing of this module are included.

Barry, K and King, L. (1998) *Beginning Teaching and Beyond*. (3rd ed), Social Science Press, NSW

Gilmour, H., Scott, J., Tyrer, D., Wilson, L. & Worlidge, H. (1987) *Six of the Best: A Practical Guide for Developing Co-operative Classroom Behaviour*. Nelson, Australia.

Mc Burney-Fry, G. (1998) *Improving your Practicum*. Social Science Press. Australia.

Madang Teachers College (1999) *Advanced Instructional and Management Skills*. Professional Development Strand.

Marsh, C. (2000) *Handbook for Beginning Teachers*. (2nd ed), Longman, NSW

Internet Sites:

<http://www.education.qld.gov.au/tal/tips>

Classroom Management



*Adapted from: McBurney-Fry, G. (1998) **Improving your Practicum**, Social Science Press.
Barry, K. & King L. (1998) **Beginning Teaching and Beyond (3rd Ed)** Social Science Press.
Marsh, C. (2000) **Handbook for Beginning Teachers (2nd ed)** Longman.*

Whenever student teachers are asked to talk about their concerns before a practicum begins, nearly always, classroom management is mentioned. It is common to hear students say, “What if the children don’t listen to me?” or “What if they won’t do what they are asked?”

Some others which may be mentioned include:

- Not being able to gain students’ attention
- Students talking while the teacher is talking
- Not knowing the answer to a student’s question
- Students calling out answers
- Students not completing work.

These are very real concerns for most teachers and the development of effective classroom management strategies by teachers is essential.

What is classroom management and why is it important?

There has been a great deal of research into classroom management from various perspectives. These include the work of such psychologists as Kounin (1970), Good and Brophy (1991), Glasser (1969) and Rogers (1990). You may know something of these approaches from your psychology and methods units studied.

Classroom management involves the teacher maintaining a positive learning environment where each student is able to learn without disturbance.

Let’s consider why classroom management is so important. We all know that if students are not able to listen, they are unable to learn effectively, but there are other reasons why classroom management is important to teachers too.

Positive classroom management helps teachers in:

- Encouraging students to develop self control
- Encouraging students to be accountable and self responsible
- Promoting student participation through well ordered and controlled learning experiences
- Increasing student interaction through more active participation
- Providing better use of teacher time in positive experiences, rather than in disciplinary measures.

3.1 Activity 1

Discuss with your partner or other members of your group your views on classroom management. What do you think makes for effective management of the classroom? Can you give some examples of what you have seen during school experience visits?

On task/off task behaviours

*Adapted from Marsh, C. (2000) **Handbook for Beginning Teachers**. Longman.*



Classroom management aims at providing effective learning opportunities for students on planned activities – that is, *on-task* activities. The more time spent on these on-task activities, the greater the learning will be.

Time spent by students during *off-task* activities is non-productive in terms of the school curriculum and reduces opportunities for learning. Some of this time will occur each day, but when too much time is spent off-task, the teacher's management skills must be questioned.

Off task behaviour can be divided into *disruptive* and *non-disruptive* categories. Disruptive behaviour occurs when a student interferes with other students during their assigned activities. These students not only fail to co-operate with the teacher, but distract others. Also of concern are the non-disruptive, off task students, who do not appear to be motivated or concentrating.

There are many factors responsible for student's behaviours, only some of which can be influenced by the activities of the teacher. It is important to remember that all class members, including the teacher, are influenced by the classroom environment and, in particular, the physical, social and emotional components.

The *physical* surroundings of the classroom may have a major impact on the way students behave. The spaces between desks, the location of equipment, the noise levels and temperature can all influence students' behaviour.

Some of these physical factors can influence such social factors as arrangement of groups, formal and informal work areas and class rules. The educational factors can also influence on task behaviours. Some students may find the curriculum boring and of little interest, which can lead to disruptive behaviours.

 **3.1 Activity 2**

Think about a classroom that you have recently visited during school experience or block teaching. Under these three headings, list some of the factors you noted related to the teacher's classroom management.

Physical

Social

Educational

Establishing a positive classroom climate

A major factor in being a successful classroom manager lies in establishing a favourable classroom climate. What does that mean? It relates to the 'feeling' of the classroom. Some classrooms operate in a very business like fashion, others may be described as 'friendly' or 'warm'.

Developing a positive classroom climate can be done in many ways. The following ideas come from Gilmour et al (1990) *Six of the Best* Nelson.

Setting up your classroom

- The physical arrangement of your room should reflect your teaching style – eg. If you ask students to complete exercises from the chalkboard, you will have their desks in rows facing the chalkboard. If you involve students in small group work, you will arrange desks or tables in groups.

Students learn well by being active participants and in order for this to happen, they need to be able to behave co-operatively. The way you arrange the desks or tables will encourage students to work together. Whatever the arrangement, it should

- Be inviting
- Permit easy movement around the room of students and teacher
- Allow easy access to equipment and materials

Some tips from Cangelosi in Marsh, (2000, p 166).

- When you first meet your new class, give directions that are simple and not likely to confuse. Give activities that almost all students will succeed in doing; have all students doing the same activity and structure the activity so you are free to monitor the conduct of the students.
- Demonstrate that you are well organised by preparing materials in advance such as name cards and resources for your lesson
- Administrative matters, such as marking the attendance roll should be done quickly.

Establishing routines

The establishment of routines is closely linked to developing a positive classroom climate. These routines, especially for a beginning teacher, can reduce the chance of major discipline problems arising.

- Routines for all students to follow when entering the room.
- Routines for cleaning up at the end of a lesson.
- Routines for working in small groups.
- Routines for the whole group, e.g. raising hand.
- Routines if the teacher is called away from the room.

Some useful do's and don'ts include:

- Do teach the routines/rules systematically and frequently.
- Do start with the simple rules first.
- Don't assume that students will remember a routine after being told once
- Don't use activities other than whole-group activities for the first few days of teaching to avoid introducing too many rules.



3.1 Activity 3

In the text box above, some examples of routines that may be established by a classroom teacher are given.

Choose three and write down the details that you would include when teaching your students these routines.

Think of two more routines that you may introduce that are not on the list.

Preventing management problems



It is important to promote a learning environment that prevents or minimises problems. Research has shown that effective teachers have less control problems than ineffective teachers, because their preparation, relationships, teaching skills and management techniques lessens the chances for problems to arise.

Barry and King (1998) discuss several ways that management problems may be prevented.

Thorough planning and organisation

It is essential that your lesson plan is carefully prepared and that you know what you want the students to learn as a result of the lesson or series of lessons. Your lesson should match the age, ability and cultural background of the students and there should be plenty of productive and interesting work for all students. Plan for slow starters, slow workers and fast finishers. Check equipment, materials and the organization of the students before the lesson. This is very important if you are teaching groups or multigrade classes. Check your knowledge of the subject matter for the lesson and if you need to, put the main points on a palm card. Make sure you have a time plan.

Establishing good relationships with the students

Teacher-student relationships are a very important ingredient in successful classroom management. Some points to consider:

- Personal qualities- being warm, natural, pleasant, approachable and tolerant
- Quickly learn names, share yourself evenly, get to know the students, set limits and apply them consistently and fairly. In the case of inappropriate behaviour, focus on the behaviour, not the student.
- Actions to help students feel good about themselves –Value each student’s interests and special skills.

3.1 Activity 4

Reflect on one of your lessons which you have taken during school experience or one you have seen taken by your supervising teacher. Discuss with your partner the points listed above and try to give examples where the teacher used any of the strategies discussed.

Conducting lessons effectively.

When conducting lessons effectively, there are a few strategies which are associated with effective classroom management.

Communicating clearly and confidently

At the beginning of your practice teaching, display a firm, confident, pleasant, interested and enthusiastic manner with the students. This is not always easy in a new situation.

Make your expectations about learning and behaviour clear to the students, and then **consistently follow up** on these expectations. Work hard on making your explanations clear. Many classroom problems are caused by students not understanding the task or what is required of them.

SOME DO'S AND DON'TS ABOUT NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

(Marsh, C., 2000, Handbook for Beginning Teachers)

DO:

- Make eye contact with students when you are speaking (be aware of cultural considerations)
- Scan students frequently while you are talking
- Face the class when you are talking.
- Use a number of positive expressions and gestures
- Direct your body to the specific students you are addressing
- Move systematically to students in different locations in the room.



DON'T:

- Look away when talking to students
- Adopt 'sloppy' positions in the room, for example, sitting on tables or leaning against a door when talking
- Make all your directions from a single location in the room.

Giving effective directions

It is important that you limit your directions to those that are absolutely necessary- say two or three at a time. This is because our short-term memory can only hold a limited number of items for a brief period of time.

- Gain full attention so that all students can hear your directions (eg. "Please stop work- all eyes to me- pause-check/comment/re-direct).
- Directions should be few in number, clear and easy to follow. Issue directions, step by step, clearly signposting each step with a key word such as " first".
- Directions for groups, or more difficult tasks should be written on the chalkboard, or paper. In this way students who are having difficulty can easily refer to what it is they have to do without calling on you.
- Check, through questioning or student demonstration, that students understand your directions. Observe student reactions for signs of understanding or puzzlement. Give them the opportunity to question you about what is required.
- Check that students carry out your directions. To do this, you need to place yourself in a position where you can see all of the students. Comment and praise if appropriate.

Demonstrating whole class awareness

Whole class awareness refers to seeing or sensing all students and acting quickly to stop problems as they may occur. It is sometimes referred to as having “eyes in the back of your head”. To practice whole class awareness, you need to keep an eye on the whole class. Regularly scan the class for signs of inattention and if you are working with a single student or a group, keep an eye on the rest of the class. Make a comment or move over towards the student who is off task. This lets the student and the class know that you are aware of what is happening and they should change their behaviour. This is known as the “ripple effect” (Kounin, 1970)

Maintaining lesson pace and variability

It is important to maintain interest through lesson pace and variation of movement and activity. If you have prepared thoroughly, your lesson should keep moving, flow smoothly and finish on time.

- Vary your voice level and communication patterns
- Questions should be distributed among the students, but in a way that they can't anticipate who will be asked next.
- Sometimes, change your focus of attention to the chalkboard, a picture or a model when explaining something to the class.

Facilitating smooth transitions/changeovers

Effective classroom managers are skilled at changing from one activity to another. Give clear directions and actively monitor the movement. Sometimes teachers will mark lesson changeovers with a song, game or a poem to allow students to relax and prepare for the next lesson.

Using rewards

Many teachers stress positive behaviour and praise or reward students for good work or behaviour.

Some of the more common rewards that you can use are:

- **Praise:** In giving praise, make sure that it has been earned through learning achievement. Stress the effort of skill that has gone into succeeding with the task. . Be simple, direct and sincere when giving praise. Also use non-verbal language such as a smile or a gesture to reinforce your pleasure at the accomplishment.
- **Tokens and activities:** Like praise, tokens and activities should be used carefully as rewards. It is much better to have students working because they want to, rather than for the reward. Some of the common tokens used by teachers include ticks, stamps, stars, stickers, certificates etc. Activities such as going first, free time, favourite games etc may also be used during teaching practice.

Rewards must also appeal to the particular age level of students to be effective. Effectiveness is increased if the reward is given immediately.

Managing multi-level groups effectively

From Madang Teachers College (1999), *Advanced Instructional and Management Skills*.



Skills for effectively managing multi-level or multigrade classes include:

Planning

- Planning appropriate activities for each group during times when the teacher is working with other groups
- Planning for effective distribution of teacher time across all groups



Giving directions:

- Clarity of directions before the lesson starts
- Checking to be sure that students understand the directions.

Teaching the Lesson

- Attending to the learning needs of each group
- Indicating equality in how each group is valued, regardless of their level of ability or composition

Supervising:

- Monitoring carefully and regularly the progress of the groups working independently without disrupting the lesson
- Dealing effectively with behaviour or learning problems in ways which minimise lesson disruption

Recognising student's independent work habits

- Recognising students' growing ability to be responsible for their own work
- Encouraging students to take responsibility for many aspects of their own learning.

Managing exceptional students in your classroom

This module provides a brief introduction to managing special needs in the classroom. Unit 5, *Special Education* will provide more detail on managing the needs of individuals with specific disabilities, whilst Unit 4 contains modules on planning and managing for group and multigrade. The second module in the Multigrade Teaching unit focuses upon managing the multigrade class.

Marsh (2000), provides some strategies which may be useful in managing the needs of intellectually and physically disabled students.

Strategies for teaching intellectually disabled students

1. Carefully develop readiness for each learning task
2. Present material in steps.
3. Develop ideas with concrete, manipulative and visually oriented materials.
4. Be prepared for large amounts of practice on the same idea or skill.
5. Relate learnings to familiar experiences and surroundings.
6. Focus on a small number of target behaviours so that students can experience success.
7. Motivate work carefully.
8. Ensure that the material used is appropriate for the physical age of the student and is not demeaning.
9. Every time students complete a task successfully they should be rewarded.

Strategies for teaching physically disabled students

1. Let disabled students know you care- build a strong rapport with each other.
2. Make your instruction meet the needs of each student – build on their strengths.
3. Give rewards for tasks successfully completed – provide positive, supportive feedback.
4. Be prepared to use new sets of materials or new methods of instruction.
5. Develop ideas with concrete, manipulative or visually oriented materials.
6. Be sensitive to the pressures and frustrations of parents of disabled children. Speak to them often.

Managing the equitable classroom.

It is important that both boys and girls are given equal opportunity to participate in classroom activities. When students are working in groups, encourage and organise mixed gender groups, with girls as well as boys playing a leading role in group work. Ensure girls have equal access to materials and teacher assistance. When asking questions, make sure the distribution of questions is fair, and girls also have the opportunity to contribute to discussions. Jobs in the classroom should be distributed equitably. It doesn't always have to be the girls who sweep the floor and clean the chalkboard, and the boys that carry boxes or books for the teacher.



Discuss these photographs. How can teachers encourage gender equity through their practices in the classroom and in the school?



3.1 Activity 5

Choose one of the areas discussed under the heading “Preventing Management Problems”. With your group, design a poster listing the main strategies a teacher could use.

3.1 Activity 6

After you have completed this, take a lesson plan you have already written (or write a new one) in the area of your choice. Include specific information on communicating clearly, giving effective directions, maintaining lesson pace, facilitating changeovers, and any use of rewards. How will you include these factors into your lesson plan, and then into your lesson?

3.1 Activity 7

Practice giving directions and praise by doing a role-play with your group. Ask the group to devise a way of evaluating your use of the skill during the role-play.

Responding to Inappropriate Behaviour

*Adapted from Barry, K & King, L (1998) **Beginning Teaching and Beyond**. Social Science Press.*



In this module so far, we have discussed techniques that you can use to minimise or prevent inappropriate behaviour, however problems will occur during your teaching practice, and you need to be able to respond to them. You can do this through careful observation, a thoughtful analysis of possible causes and through the selection and use of an appropriate technique.

Following are some simple techniques designed to stop the problem through quick, low key but effective action. These techniques will not work in every situation, because every student is different. The best we can do is make a wise decision based on what we know of the student, the class, our teaching performance and some underlying principles from educational psychology.

Look / pause / comment

These methods can be used with many minor problems such as brief inattention, a quick conversation between students, a non-response, a spontaneous call out, or a distraction.

Non-verbal techniques, such as stopping mid-way in a sentence, a pause or a look in the direction of the offender can often resolve the difficulty without stopping the lesson. A comment can involve naming the student, asking a question, requesting attention, etc.

Presence

Presence involves moving over to where the inappropriate behaviour is taking place. Generally, this will result in the resolution of the situation. If necessary, try to find out what caused the problem. It could be something simple such as not paying attention, or it could be the work is too hard, too easy or not very interesting.

Reprimand

A reprimand may be effective in resolving an individual or class disruption. However, it should be used with caution in cases of attention-seeking behaviour such as showing off, calling out, asking irrelevant questions or wandering around the room as it can be counter productive. This is because you are rewarding the attention seeker with your attention. In this case, you should ignore the attention seeking behaviour and give approval for the sort of behaviour that you want.

If a reprimand is what is required, you may find the following procedure helpful:

- *For an individual:* With a quiet but authoritative voice, name the student, issue a mild reprimand and phrase it in such a way as to relate to the work in hand, eg. “You won’t be able to learn how to do this Meko, if you don’t pay careful attention”. Pause and follow up with a sustained look at Meko. Praise someone who is on task.
- *For a class disturbance:*
 - stop the lesson for a moment

- restate specifically what is expected and desired concerning noise level and the reasons for this, making a point about the difference between “silence” and “quiet working”.
- Remind the students which signals will be used if the noise level is unacceptable
- Check again that all students understood clearly the requirement by asking one or some of the students to restate the rules or procedures and
- After returning the class to the task, attend immediately to any situation which threatens to break the contract of understanding.

Time out

Time-out involves isolating the student from the desirable situation, such as being with the group or completing an enjoyable activity, for a set amount of time.

Before doing this, you should give the student one quiet warning- “Meko, if you don’t pay attention, I will have to move you away from the group”.

If Meko does not pay attention then you should move her to another desk or to an open space within the room, but not outside the room. You must be able to see Meko at all times and she should continue to be involved in the learning task, otherwise, she may see separation from the group as a reward.

After a few minutes, when Meko has reflected on her behaviour and settled down, she should be allowed back to her place. When you see her on-task you should acknowledge it.

Student – teacher discussion

Discussion is a technique best suited to more serious problems, such as cheating, defiance, or physically aggressive behaviour. If a serious problem occurs, stay calm and do not get into a confrontation. Set the class to work and remove the student from the situation. Tell the student that action will be taken later and after discussion. This gives time to diffuse the situation, retains your credibility with the other students and gives the defiant student time to think it over.

DO:

- Be consistent in terms of the punishment you give to students.
- Get the offending student to state how he/she should behave.
- Stop the offending behaviour as inconspicuously as possible.

DON'T

- Give additional schoolwork as a punishment such as more maths.
- Give punishment to a whole class when only one or two individuals are to blame.
- Use sarcasm and ridicule

 **3.1 Activity 8**

Read each of the following teaching episodes and after you read it, reflect on whether you agree or disagree with the action taken. Give a reason to support your response. Can you suggest one appropriate alternate response for each episode?

I had two disruptive Grade 3 students. These two sat on the same desk towards the back of the class. I separated them and placed them at the front of the class. Also I spent some time with them and offered encouragement. It seemed to work.

I like to slam the blackboard ruler or a piece of wood on the desk when the class was noisy and shout at them for attention.

I used the “stare and wait” technique. I would just stand there before the class and wait until all eyes were on me. I kept waiting, and waiting, until I was satisfied with the class behaviour. I would stare in on certain students to get their attention.

 **3.1 Activity 9**

The following examples represent inappropriate ways of responding to unproductive behaviour. Look at each example and say why it is inappropriate, and what might be a better way to respond to the problem.

- *Overuse of “ssshh” to obtain silence*
 - *Targeting the wrong student*
 - *Threatening without follow up*
 - *Constant focusing on the negative in a loud whole class voice*
 - *Removal out of the room without work – and out of the teacher’s sight*
 - *Inconsistent responding to inappropriate behaviour*
 - *Teacher talk over classroom noise.*
-

Checklist for Effective Management During Teaching Practice

From Barry & King, (1998) Beginning Teaching and Beyond, pp 272–274

This checklist can be used to check your management skills in the classroom. You may like to use it on yourself as a self-assessment during practicum or you may use it to observe a peer or your supervising teacher.

Settling in

Do I know the students' names?

Do I know where each student sits/ works?

Do I know where the materials are stored?

Do I know how the students leave/enter the room?

Do I know how students are grouped for different activities?

Do I know how to distribute or collect materials?

Do I know the classroom rules?

Do I know the classroom rewards?

Do I know the classroom penalties?

Do I know the problem students?

What techniques does the teacher use to control disruptive students?

Planning and preparation

Was my lesson carefully planned and structured?

To what extent were the subject matter, learning task and teaching strategy matched to the age, ability and cultural background of the students?

Did I know my subject matter?

Did I plan for early finishers?

Did I have a clear understanding of what the students were to learn as a result of the lesson?

Did I check resources and equipment before the lesson?

Did I think about potential trouble spots before the lesson?

Did I have the students organised, especially groups, before the lesson?

Teacher – student relationships

Did I use students' names?

Did I make eye contact with each student every day?

Are my expectations fair and reasonable?

Did I model the behaviour and standards that I wanted?

Was I sincere?

Was I fair, open minded and consistent in dealing with inappropriate behaviour?

Conducting the lesson

Communicating clearly and confidently

Did I gain full attention before speaking to the class?

Did I make my expectations clear to students?

Did I consistently follow up on my expectations?

Was my voice clear and well modulated?

Were my explanations clear?

Did I check to see that they were understood?



Giving effective directions

Did I limit the number of directions that I gave?

Did I check to see that my directions were carried out?

Demonstrating whole class awareness

Did I scan the class regularly?

Did I quickly identify and act upon students who were off task?

Maintaining lesson pace and variability

Did my lesson flow smoothly?

Did I keep students alert through:

- Voice variation?
- Communication patterns?
- Variation in questioning?

- Checking understanding?
- Focussing attention on visual material?
- Quick, purposeful supervision?
- Marking work?
- Finishing my lesson on time?

Facilitating smooth transitions/changeovers

Did I change quickly and smoothly from one part of the lesson to another?

Did I change quickly from one lesson to another?

Did I conduct orderly entries and dismissals?

Praise, tokens and activities

Did I use praise, tokens and activities?

Managing groups effectively

Did I manage groups effectively?

Responding to inappropriate behaviour

Did I carefully observe the inappropriate behaviour?

Did I carefully analyse the problem, especially the cause or causes (the task, the teacher, the class, the school, the student, the home?)

Review Questions

- Why are planning and relationship skills so important to classroom management?
- List and describe the strategies discussed to help prevent or minimise management problems.
- List five techniques that teachers could use to respond to inappropriate behaviour in the classroom.
- Why should punishment for unacceptable behaviour only be used as last resort?

Glossary and Key Terms

Use this page to record key terms or unknown vocabulary.