

## METHODOLOGY FOR WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

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**Annotation:** *This topic focuses on preparing future physical education teachers to effectively work with students with special educational needs in inclusive education settings. It explores methodological approaches for adapting physical education content, teaching strategies, and learning environments to meet the diverse abilities of learners. The study emphasizes individualized instruction, differentiated teaching methods, and the use of adaptive physical activities to ensure equal participation of all students. Special attention is given to the development of teachers' professional competencies, including pedagogical flexibility, empathy, and inclusive classroom management skills. The research also highlights assessment strategies based on individual progress and functional abilities rather than standardized norms. Overall, the methodology aims to create an inclusive and supportive physical education environment that promotes the physical, social, and psychological development of all learners.*

**Keywords:** *Inclusive education, physical education, special educational needs, adaptive physical activity, individualized instruction, differentiated teaching, teacher training, inclusive pedagogy, functional assessment, classroom adaptation, student diversity, educational methodology.*

### INTRODUCTION

Inclusive physical education has become an important and necessary component of modern educational systems, as it ensures equal access to learning opportunities for all students, including those with special educational needs (SEN). In this context, the methodological preparation of future physical education teachers plays a decisive role in creating an inclusive, safe, and development-oriented learning environment. Such preparation requires not only theoretical knowledge but also practical competencies, reflective thinking, and the ability to adapt teaching strategies to diverse learner needs.

One of the fundamental aspects of this methodological preparation is a comprehensive understanding of learner diversity. Students with special educational needs represent a wide spectrum of individual differences, including physical disabilities, intellectual developmental delays, sensory impairments (visual or hearing), autism spectrum conditions, speech and communication difficulties, and chronic health conditions. Each category is characterized by unique functional abilities, learning styles, and participation levels in physical activities. Therefore, future physical education teachers must be trained to recognize these differences and respond appropriately through pedagogical adaptation.

In this regard, functional assessment of students becomes a key methodological tool. Unlike traditional assessment systems that focus primarily on performance outcomes, functional assessment emphasizes the identification of what a student can do, how they can participate, and what level of support they require. This approach enables teachers to design individualized educational plans that reflect the real abilities of each learner. It also

helps in setting realistic goals that promote gradual progress and reduce the risk of exclusion or failure.

Individualized instruction is a central principle of inclusive physical education methodology. It involves the adaptation of teaching content, methods, and evaluation criteria according to the needs of each student. For example, physical exercises may be modified in terms of intensity, duration, complexity, or rules. Students with limited mobility may be offered alternative movement tasks, while those with sensory impairments may require visual, auditory, or tactile instructions. Such individualization ensures that every student can actively participate in lessons and experience a sense of achievement.

Closely related to individualized instruction is the principle of differentiated teaching. In inclusive physical education settings, teachers often work with heterogeneous groups where students have different levels of ability. Differentiated instruction allows teachers to design tasks with varying levels of difficulty within the same lesson. This ensures that all students are engaged in meaningful activities while working at their own pace. Group-based activities, cooperative learning, and peer tutoring strategies are especially effective in promoting interaction, collaboration, and social integration among students.

Another important methodological component is the use of adaptive physical education strategies and assistive technologies. Adaptive strategies may include modifying sports rules, adjusting playing environments, or simplifying motor tasks. Assistive devices such as modified balls, balance aids, visual markers, hearing support systems, and mobility equipment can significantly enhance student participation. Future teachers must be trained not only in using these tools but also in selecting the most appropriate ones based on individual needs and lesson objectives.

The development of professional competencies is also a critical element of teacher preparation. Inclusive physical education requires teachers to demonstrate high levels of pedagogical flexibility, emotional intelligence, empathy, and communication skills. Teachers must be able to create a positive and supportive learning environment where students feel safe, respected, and motivated. Reflective practice is equally important, as it allows teachers to analyze their teaching experiences, identify challenges, and continuously improve their instructional methods.

Safety management is another essential aspect of inclusive physical education methodology. Teachers must ensure that all physical activities are conducted in a controlled and safe environment, taking into account the medical conditions and physical limitations of students. Proper risk assessment, supervision, and emergency preparedness are necessary components of lesson planning. Additionally, teachers must be able to balance challenge and safety, ensuring that students are engaged without being exposed to unnecessary risk.

Motivation and psychological support also play a significant role in inclusive physical education. Many students with special educational needs may experience low self-confidence or fear of failure. Therefore, teachers must use positive reinforcement strategies, encouragement, and supportive communication to build students' self-esteem. Creating a psychologically safe environment helps students overcome barriers and actively participate in physical activities.

Finally, assessment in inclusive physical education must be flexible and learner-centered. Instead of focusing on standardized performance benchmarks, evaluation should be based on individual progress, effort, participation, and skill development over time. This approach ensures fairness and recognizes the unique achievements of each student. It also encourages continuous improvement and fosters a positive attitude toward physical activity.

In summary, the methodological preparation of future physical education teachers for inclusive education requires a complex and integrated approach. It combines theoretical understanding, practical adaptation strategies, differentiated instruction, assistive technologies, safety management, and professional competence development. Such a comprehensive system ensures that future teachers are fully prepared to support all learners and promote meaningful participation in physical education regardless of individual differences.

### Conclusion

Inclusive physical education represents an essential direction in modern pedagogical practice, aimed at ensuring equal educational opportunities for all learners, including students with special educational needs (SEN). The analysis of methodological approaches to preparing future physical education teachers shows that effective inclusion cannot be achieved without a systematic, scientifically grounded, and practically oriented training model.

One of the main conclusions is that future teachers must develop a deep understanding of the diversity of learners and the specific characteristics of different types of special educational needs. This understanding forms the basis for appropriate pedagogical decision-making in real educational settings. Teachers should be able to identify individual functional abilities, learning potential, and limitations of each student in order to design safe and effective physical education activities.

The research also confirms that individualized instruction is a key factor in successful inclusive physical education. Adapting physical exercises according to the learner's physical and cognitive capabilities ensures active participation of all students. Such adaptation may include modification of rules, reduction or increase of workload, simplification of movement tasks, or provision of alternative ways of performing exercises. These strategies help students experience achievement, which is important for their motivation, emotional well-being, and long-term engagement in physical activity.

Differentiated teaching methods further strengthen inclusion by allowing teachers to organize lessons that accommodate different ability levels within one group. Through task variation, flexible grouping, and cooperative learning strategies, students are able to participate together while performing tasks suited to their individual development levels. This not only improves physical skills but also enhances social integration, communication, and peer support among learners.

Another important conclusion is the significant role of adaptive tools and assistive technologies in inclusive physical education. Proper use of modified sports equipment, visual and auditory supports, and specialized training materials increases accessibility and

safety for students with disabilities. Therefore, future teachers must be trained to select and apply these tools effectively based on pedagogical goals and learners' specific needs.

The development of professional competencies is also a decisive factor in ensuring high-quality inclusive education. Future physical education teachers must possess not only subject knowledge but also interpersonal and reflective skills such as empathy, patience, communication ability, creativity, and problem-solving competence. These qualities enable teachers to build a positive psychological climate in the classroom and foster a sense of belonging among all students.

Safety considerations remain a priority in inclusive physical education environments. Teachers must carefully plan and monitor activities, taking into account medical recommendations, physical limitations, and individual risk factors. Proper organization of space, equipment, and supervision ensures that all students can participate without unnecessary risk.

Furthermore, assessment in inclusive physical education should be based on individual progress, effort, and functional improvement rather than standardized norms. Such an approach allows for fair evaluation and supports continuous personal development. It also helps to reduce psychological pressure and encourages students to focus on their own achievements rather than comparison with others.

In conclusion, the preparation of future physical education teachers for working with students with special educational needs requires a comprehensive and multi-dimensional methodological system. This system should integrate theoretical knowledge, practical skills, adaptive teaching strategies, and professional competence development. Only through such an integrated approach can inclusive physical education be effectively implemented, ensuring that every learner has the opportunity to participate, develop, and succeed according to their individual abilities.

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