

The Crossfields Institute Educational Approach

The guiding idea of our educational approach is the vision, values and purpose of Crossfields Institute:

Our vision is a world where every human being has the voice and tools to creatively engage in social, ethical, ecological and spiritual questions to shape the future together.

We believe that realising human potential is the transformative solution to a fairer, more caring and environmentally sustainable world.

We research and create education which inspires the individual to engage their potential by developing situational awareness, independent thinking, emotional intelligence, imagination, self-knowledge and the capacity to consciously take action.

Context

The Crossfields Institute Educational Approach is inspired by a holistic and integrative approach to education. Teaching and learning at Crossfields Institute is not just a process of the transmission and transaction of knowledge, but recognises the distinctive abilities of every student for self-guided, intelligent and creative thinking. We cultivate an educational experience that promotes a more balanced development of the individual from intellectual, physical, spiritual, emotional, social and aesthetic perspectives.

We aim to equip our students with an honest self-awareness, based on reflexive practice, which will enable them to be self-motivated, to take personal responsibility for their own actions and embrace opportunities for self-development. This also develops the capacity to be independent and creative in their thinking and to be effective in the way they approach and begin to solve problems.

Learning and Teaching propositions

Our work is informed by the following Learning and Teaching propositions:

1. Reflexive Practice

We promote reflexive practice whereby staff are all reflective practitioners who continuously engage in critical reflection to enhance teaching practice. This also helps us to remain fluid in teaching methods in the dynamic and changing environment of each teaching and learning space. Students are also supported to ensure that they develop a range of reflective and reflexive capacities. This is important as such capacities can help learning and build lifelong resilience.

2. Learner at the Centre

We hold the learner at the centre of the educational process and encourage them to engage with their own biography. This student-centred model of learning encourages teachers to view their students as academic partners who work together to produce relevant and meaningful learning

experiences. Teaching is therefore a facilitated learning partnership based on a reciprocal exchange of skills and knowledge where learners are guided to their own knowledge rather than being fed facts.

3. Learning in Context

Our teaching recognises real world contexts and we encourage students to use their personal and professional experiences as a focus for their learning. We support learners in working insightfully within the broad context of their study. This includes their own individual context as well as group, humanity and environmental contexts. We recognise each individual's intellectual, emotional, social, physical, artistic, creative and spiritual potentials, and in doing so we embrace a rich diversity of learners.

4. Holistic Approach

We adopt a holistic approach to teaching and assessment where theory, practice and emotional engagement are fully integrated. This supports students in adopting a creative approach to their work and ensures assessment can be meaningful and authentic. We ask our students to engage with new questions and to be faced with problems that they think are important and relevant to their own lives; this, we believe, encourages participation which goes beyond just gaining credit and passing exams.

5. Inclusive Learning Spaces

In the creation of our learning spaces we promote the idea that students should feel safe to bring their whole selves, including their dreams and vulnerabilities, into the learning spaces; they should find a welcoming space that honours their individuality and their struggles yet still encourages personal and collective responsibility. We therefore aim to provide a learning environment that inspires collaboration, dialogue and appropriate social responsibility. Our conviction is that learning experiences should be facilitated through a variety of different activities.

6. Conscious Action

Our approach will equip students with the knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes needed to work and live in a way that safeguards environmental, social and economic well-being, both in the present and for future generations. This also involves the idea of individual autonomy and using conscious action to effectively promote involvement and engagement as a learner, as well as the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility.

Our guidance on assessment is informed by this approach and explains how assessment is embedded into our teaching and learning practices.