

Development and Implementation of Social Dimension Strategies in Armenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina  
through Cross-Regional Peer-Learning

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# Guidelines for inclusive learning and teaching in high schools and universities

DRAFT VERSION ONLY

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## **This booklet was designed as part of the Erasmus + funded project ‘INCLUSION’.**

The INCLUSION project has enabled faculty, administrators and colleagues from NGOs and Ministries of Higher Education to work together to develop guidelines, resources and training materials that will enable teachers from high schools and universities to:

“promote inclusive education for **all learners**, including those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, those from a migrant background, and those with special educational needs.”

We have done this through designing:

“measures to empower teachers, school leaders and academic staff, helping them convey common values, and promote active citizenship while transmitting a sense of belonging and responding to the diverse needs of learners.”

*COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching, COM (2018) 23, 2018/0007 (NLE), Recommendation 4, 16.*

This booklet has several sections named “**Reflection Activity**” where you can discuss ways in which you can develop excellent practice in your own institutions.

Our main focus is on working with students from diverse backgrounds; and the effective management of their transition from high school to university

# 1. Introduction

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“All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.”<sup>1</sup>

(United Nations, 1948)

Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the UN General Assembly on 10 December 1948 contains the central postulate of the equality in rights and dignity of all human beings. The pathway towards equal enjoyment of human rights led to a plethora of human rights instruments that reiterate the values of non-discrimination and inclusion in all areas of life. Education, as Katharina Tomasevski, former UN Special Representative pointed out, herein *“is the key to unlocking other human rights.”*<sup>2</sup> To do so effectively, it is on the one hand necessary to teach human rights awareness to learners in kindergartens, elementary, secondary and high schools, colleges and universities and beyond in life-long learning programs or through informal learning. On the other hand, educational programmes themselves have to be sensitive to the human rights and diversity of learners, parents, teachers, administrative staffers and of the members of the respective societies they are embedded in.

In the context of European Union (EU) primary law, Art. 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) reflects the abovementioned values: *“The Union is founded on the values of respect for **human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities.** These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.”*<sup>3</sup>

To implement this postulate in the area of education, the European Council (EC), based on evaluations carried out within Union member states (MS), recommended that MS should *“promote inclusive education for all learners [including those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, those from a migrant background, and those with special educational needs].”*<sup>4</sup> Also, with regards to higher education and teaching, the EC reiterated the importance of MS *implementing “measures to empower teachers, school leaders and academic staff helping them convey common values, and promote active citizenship while*

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<sup>1</sup> UN General Assembly, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 10 December 1948, 217 A (III), Art. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Camille Roch/Amnesty International, 10 quotes on the power of human rights education, Quote 7, online: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/education/2016/02/10-quotes-on-the-power-of-human-rights-education/> [accessed: 13 June 2018].

<sup>3</sup> European Union, Consolidated version of the Treaty on European Union, 13 December 2007, 2008/C 115/01, Art. 2.

<sup>4</sup> COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching, COM(2018) 23, 2018/0007 (NLE), Recommendation 4, 16.

*transmitting a sense of belonging and responding to the diverse needs of learners.*<sup>5</sup> This tradition of “soft governance” – the EU *encouraging* its MS via the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) rather than setting European legal (hard law) standards – is inherent in the Bologna Process. According to academia, there has been significant progress in some areas, e.g. regarding the common grading system (“European Qualifications Framework”).<sup>6</sup> However, in the agenda of social justice, problems have arisen, and, according to experts, there “has been a lack of accord between the priorities set by the EU and those of member states the definition of which groups count as under-represented [because this definition] reflects complex and competing political priorities that are often highly idiosyncratic.”<sup>7</sup> Hence, one can deduce that there are indeed issues left to resolve inside the Union and in states of the European neighbourhood to guarantee inclusive learning environments.

In this context, the ERASMUS+ project “INCLUSION - Development and Implementation of Social Dimension Strategies in Armenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina through Cross-regional Peer Learning” has done important work on the ground at higher education institutions and related stakeholder groups in Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and within the participating EU member states in the spirit of inclusiveness in education. The consortium aimed to clarify how higher education institutions (HEIs) can tackle theoretical, methodological, institutional and practical aspects of implementing inclusive learning environments. In this endeavour, partners are bearing in mind the goal to contribute to the further development of HEIs that promote the enjoyment of human rights, the respect of human dignity and putting inclusion into practise. To do so, extensive text-based research setting the tone and clarifying the state of the art provided the basis for discussions, workshops and exercises at the partner institutions inspired by the ideas of cross-regional and peer-learning. This practical, hands-on approach was even more fruitful in the light of the different experiences, views and angles of all contributors, which cover a wide range of different stakeholders (higher education professionals, students, administrative staff and government officials).

For all these reasons, we are glad to be able to provide you with the *ERASMUS+ INCLUSION Guidelines for Inclusive Learning and Teaching*. Herein, you find the outcomes of the consortium’s research on inclusive curricula, classrooms, presentations, assessments, technologies, resources, trips and visits, admission policies and further readings and resources. Herewith, we, the consortium members, hope to contribute to closing the implementation gaps by providing new and easily transferable approaches to the creation of inclusive learning environments at in universities and high schools in the EU, the partner regions and beyond. The Guidelines are a set of useful tools and information for university faculty and high school teachers, so that you and your students can explore all the possibilities and opportunities of inclusive learning and teaching in your own institutions and classrooms.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., Recommendation 7, 17.

<sup>6</sup> See Sheila Riddell & Elisabet Weedon (2014) European higher education, the inclusion of students from under-represented groups and the Bologna Process, *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 33:1, 26-44, 42.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

Be curious!

*INCLUSION Project Team*

*This booklet offers high school teachers and university faculty a general overview of inclusive approaches to learning and teaching, and may be used as background reading when planning training events and workshops. It may also be used as the basis for policy development in your own institution.*

**Please see the *INCLUSION* website for more information at:**

**<http://inclusionerasmus.org/>**

## 2. Understandings of inclusion

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In this Project, we acknowledge that educational institutions such as universities and high schools vary enormously in the provision that they make for different groups of students. The five countries involved in the INCLUSION project (Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the United Kingdom) all have very different populations, with a variety of national and regional political systems. They also have different ways of training teachers and supporting university faculty to develop their teaching skills. Yet we all agree that students in our education systems should be entitled and able to access a full range of academic courses at age 18+; that their teachers should be aware of best practices in the area of inclusion and support for learning; and that the institutions they attend should each have a clear understanding of the need to ensure inclusive approaches to learning and teaching.

Inclusive practice can be defined as attitudes and methods that ensure all learners can access mainstream education. Everyone works to make sure all learners feel welcome and valued, and that they get the right support to help them develop their talents and achieve their goals.

(ALFFIE, 2018)

We recognise that students may come from a wide range of family backgrounds and socio-economic settings. Some of them may be studying in their first language, whereas others are studying in their second or third languages. In some areas, there are high percentages of migrant families, who have moved to their new homes from areas of conflict or high unemployment. Typically, around 10% of any population may have a disability or learning difference of some sort (such as a physical disability, or a condition such as dyslexia or autism).

According to Booth and Ainscow (2002), inclusion involves change. It is an unending process of increasing learning and participation for *all students*. It is an ideal to which universities and schools can aspire, but many institutions may never fully reach. But inclusion happens as soon as the process of increasing participation is started. An inclusive institution needs to constantly revise and enhance its approaches to



learning and teaching, to ensure that all students are fully included in the day to day activities and learning opportunities on offer.

Inclusion in education involves:

- Valuing all students and staff equally
- Acknowledging the right of students to an education in their locality
- Restructuring the cultures, policies and practices in educational institutions so that they respond to the diversity of local as well as regional / international students
- Increasing the participation of students in, and reducing their exclusion from, the cultures, curricula and communities of the education system
- Reducing barriers to learning and participation for all students, not only those who are categorised as 'having special educational needs' or a 'disability'
- Learning from attempts to overcome barriers to the access and participation of particular students to make changes for the benefit of students more widely.
- Viewing the difference between students as resources to support learning, rather than as problems to be overcome.
- Emphasising the role of schools and universities in building community and developing values, as well as in increasing achievement.
- Fostering mutually sustaining relationships between schools and communities.
- Recognising that inclusion in education is just one aspect of inclusion in society.

**According to the blog by Concordia University of Portland on inclusive education, inclusive education** is when all students, regardless of any physical, mental or medical challenges they may have, are placed in age-appropriate general education classes that are in their own neighbourhood schools to receive high quality instruction, interventions, and supports that enable them to meet success in the core curriculum (Bui, Quirk, Almazan, & Valenti, 2010; Alquraini & Gut, 2012).

The school and classroom operate on the premise that students with disabilities are as fundamentally competent as students without disabilities. Therefore, all students are encouraged to be full participants in their classrooms and in the local school community. Much of the movement is related to legislation that students receive their education in the least restrictive environment (LRE). This means they are with their peers without disabilities to the maximum degree possible, with general education the placement of first choice for all students (Alquraini & Gut, 2012).

Successful inclusive education happens primarily through accepting, understanding, and attending to student differences and diversity, which can include the physical, cognitive, academic, social, and emotional. This is not to say that students *never* need to spend time out of regular education classes,

because sometimes they do for a very particular purpose—for instance, for speech or occupational therapy. But the goal is this should be the exception.

The driving principle is to make all students feel welcomed, appropriately challenged, and supported in their efforts. It's also critically important the adults are supported, too. This includes the regular education teacher and the special education teacher as well as all other staff and faculty who are key stakeholders, including parents.

### **Inclusive learning and teaching methods**

Inclusion does not only mean that we are all equal, or that we all agree, instead it creates a new attitude towards all our students, including those from different regions or countries, those with learning differences, disabilities or other minority backgrounds. An inclusive approach encourages schools and universities to consider different admissions regulations or offer different ways of learning, rather than solely focusing on medical issues or terms such as “typical” or “normal”. When envisioning the model of an inclusive educational setting, the following dimensions will need addressing:

1. Creation of inclusive policy
2. Creation of a welcoming, inclusive culture
3. Development of inclusive practices, resources and technologies

Inclusive practice can offer teaching staff and administrators a range of practical solutions to ensure that quality teaching and learning is taking place, and also enable students with learning differences (such as dyslexia or autism) to remain with their peers and study alongside them.

It is necessary to be aware of the individual characteristics and learning needs of each student, and to review how staffing is organised; which technologies can be used to support learning; and to ensure that all students are able to succeed according to their interests and abilities.

### **Inclusion support methods**

In today's practice, four key areas of inclusive practices can be identified:

**Collaboration:** Faculty will sometimes need to liaise with other professionals such as psychologists, school teachers, therapists, social workers, etc to ensure that the students' needs are being fully met at university

**Context-specific support:** some universities may need to employ specialist support staff or counsellors, or to have access to specialist technical support when required ( e.g. for specialist equipment or software)

**Staff training:** Professional development should be offered at all universities, for both faculty and administrators, to ensure that an inclusive approach is developed

**Suitable resourcing:** Ensuring resources and technology support for schools and universities (such as electronic textbooks, accessible accommodation, transportation facilities, etc.).

Important conditions that have to be fulfilled for a successful inclusion process might include:

- Creating a positive atmosphere, an atmosphere of support and acceptance
- Creating a sense of security, success and peer-cooperation
- Creating opportunities for learning new skills and addressing the developmental potential of each student
- Creating enough time and space for an individualised approach where required

Some students may need an individualised approach in class, which may include:

- Developing student independence through gradual support
- Allowing additional time for solving tasks / assessments
- Individual assignment of tasks / offering a range of different formats for resources
- Mutual planning of work with the student and the tutor

### **What do we mean by “inclusion”?**

There are many understanding of the word “inclusion”, which include the following:

- pedagogies should meet the diversity of learners’ needs, and should not create barriers for particular students or student groups
- pedagogies should enable accessibility and be crafted through consultation amongst a variety of institutional stakeholders
- assessment should be multimodal and flexible while maintaining academic standards
- institutions should adopt a more holistic, comprehensive approach to supporting teaching and learning for diverse groups of learners.

### 3. The inclusive curriculum

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A vital part of improving the quality of learning and teaching in our educational institutions is to offer a curriculum which addresses issues of liberation, equality and diversity and includes all students as equal participants. Such a curriculum will not only reflect the experiences and interests of students in the classroom, but also introduce them to alternative ways of understanding the modern world.

It is an imperative on institutions that they design their curriculum in such a way as to promote success among all students. An inclusive curriculum design approach is one that takes into account students' educational, cultural and social background and experience as well as the presence of any physical or sensory impairment and their mental well-being. It enables higher education institutions to embed quality enhancement processes that ensure an anticipatory response to equality in learning and teaching.

(Higher Education Academy, 2011)

#### **Content and diversity**

The concepts and ideas involved in debates concerning inclusive education are subject to struggles over their meaning and application. It is needed to emphasise that social, political and educational movements which support the struggle for equality and widening participation in community education, regardless of difference, have to contend with other dominant and deeply entrenched processes, ways of thinking and organisation which are based on a construction of the normal and normative ways of thinking about teaching and learning and desirable outcomes of education (Armstrong & Barton, 2007).

An inclusive curriculum addresses each student's cognitive, emotional, social and creative development. It is based on the four pillars of education for the twenty first century: learning to know, to do, to be and to live together. It has an instrumental role to play in fostering tolerance and promoting human rights, and is a powerful tool for transcending cultural, religious, gender-based and other differences. An inclusive curriculum takes gender, cultural identity and language background into consideration. It involves breaking negative stereotypes not only in presentations and textbooks, but also, and more importantly, in each teacher's attitudes and expectations (UNESCO, 2009).

Liberating the curriculum requires teachers to review the books and learning resources listed on the syllabus, as well as the way course content is delivered and assessed. Creating a more inclusive learning environment is also vital if all students are going to feel welcome in the classroom or laboratory. If widening student participation is to really be effective, institutions need to focus not just on admissions but also on the retention of students after arrival. A key way of doing this is to encouraging teachers with a responsibility for curriculum design to embed liberation, equality, and diversity in the learning experience, so that students from under-represented backgrounds know they are valued as equal members of the learning community.

An inclusive curriculum ensures that education continues to act as an agent for liberal and democratic values, and encourages a mutual understanding of different viewpoints. Since all students' needs are considered, students have an increased chance of progression and academic success.

## **Inclusive course timetables (including exam and assessment schedules)**

### *Curriculum Content*

One of the main ways that diversity can be embedded in the curriculum is through incorporating these issues into the content of the course. This is easier for some subjects than others, but there is scope in all subjects to make the curriculum content more reflective of diversity and more thoughtful about issues of liberation. However, it is important to avoid being tokenistic. Diversity should be embedded into the mainstream curriculum, rather than being singled-out as separate from the main curriculum. Some elements of curriculum content that can be considered are (Gore and Viney, 2006):

- Course topics: Wherever possible, course topics should include the perspectives of minority groups, different religions and nationalities, disabled people and both men / women.
- Suggested readings: Suggested readings should ideally feature writers from a wide variety of backgrounds. Alternative perspectives to the 'mainstream' narrative should be considered.
- Case studies: Case studies are used across many disciplines and are an easy way of incorporating diverse views. Instead of stereotypical examples, the people featured in case studies can be more nuanced and reflective of the diversity of the learning community.
- Identity as part of the curriculum: By incorporating issues of identity into the curriculum, all students are given a chance to consider the way that their identity shapes their learning experience and how this relates to their place in society.

The Quality Assurance Agency's UK (2010) Code of Practice on Disabled Students indicates several ways that institutions should be seeking to make their courses more accessible to disabled students and those

with learning differences. Several of these points can also be considered best practice for other groups of under-represented students and could be readily adapted to help contribute to a more inclusive curriculum:

- The design of new programmes and the review and/or revalidation of existing programmes should include assessment of the extent to which the programme is inclusive of disabled students.
- The design and implementation of learning and teaching strategies and related activities, as well as the learning environment, should recognize the entitlement of disabled students to participate in all activities provided as part of their programme of study.
- Academic assessment practices should ensure that disabled students are given the opportunity to demonstrate the achievement of learning outcomes and competence standards.
- Academic support and guidance should be accessible and appropriate for disabled students, as well as all those from other minority groups

## **Staff / faculty roles and responsibilities**

A major challenge in initiatives which seek to liberate the curriculum is embedding this within the culture and structure of the institution; staff need to understand the importance of liberation, equality, and diversity in the curriculum and should be equipped with the tools necessary to incorporate these issues into their courses and foster an inclusive learning environment.

At universities, teaching staff need to consider each student's previous experiences and assessments, inside and outside the classroom. Teaching or support staff should construct a profile for each student with information about gender, age, language knowledge, preferred ways of learning and access requirements. There might also be information about the student's specific learning needs, or information on any learning differences such as dyslexia, deafness, or speech and language delay. All sensitive information will need to be kept in a secure place, and remain confidential unless the student has given permission for the data to be shared.

The teacher or support staff will need to have a conversation with each student about their interests and observe the student in the classroom setting. This helps the teacher tailor their teaching to match each student's needs and consider if any modifications and assessments to use into their weekly lesson plan. The teaching staff may need to learn about different teaching styles, how to be aware of different students' needs, especially they must learn about the different educational needs of students currently registered at the university, so they are better equipped to help them learn.

### **REFLECTION ACTIVITY**

What sort of data do you collect about your current students? Is this information shared sensitively with teaching staff so that they can plan for inclusive learning and teaching activities?

Think about a programme or course in your own institution. How can you make the curriculum more inclusive?

Can you find some examples of inclusive curricula from other schools / universities that are fully inclusive? What can you learn from these examples?

How can technology / e-learning help you to develop a more inclusive curriculum?

What sort of faculty / staff training is needed at your institution?

## 4. Inclusive assessments

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Inclusive assessment is based on the principle that all students should have a way of demonstrating that they are able to evidence the learning outcomes of their module or course. Inclusive assessment does not

make assumptions about the needs of certain students; instead it considers the strengths and weaknesses of all students. Inclusive assessment uses the full range of assessment options available, and often students will be offered a choice from a range of assessment formats. Plymouth University suggest that there are seven steps to inclusive assessment

1. Underpin your assessment with good assessment design principles
2. Use a variety of assessment methods within your module / programme
3. Incorporate choice to your assessment
4. Design inclusive exams and tests
5. Consider how technology can assist you and your students
6. Prepare, engage and support students in the assessment process
7. Monitor, review, and share practice with other faculty

Let's be clear, inclusive assessment is not about 'easier assessments', the aim is to assess students equitably, and for them to achieve and demonstrate all aspects of their learning with as limited a hindrance from their personal circumstances as is practical. By assessing all students on the same basis, we hope to minimise discrimination, and students' feelings of isolation and 'separateness.'

Some people will need specialist additional support, but these should be exceptions. Very importantly inclusive assessment must not compromise academic or professional standards. It should improve the chances for all students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills and to meet their learning outcomes.

(Plymouth University, 2015)

**Oxford Brookes University have some useful questions for faculty to consider when choosing appropriate and inclusive assessments:**

- Are you able to offer students alternative methods of assessment to demonstrate the same learning outcomes? e.g. for a student whose first language isn't English; for a student with dyslexia who has difficulties writing essays; for a student who is blind or deaf (is it reasonable for them to present their work in Sign Language?).
- Do you use a variety of assessment methods? e.g. examinations; in-class tests; multiple-choice questions; group presentations; viva voce examinations; course work; creation of audio-visual material; performance; reflective diaries; laboratory work.
- Do your assessment questions enable students to demonstrate their understanding of issues by providing examples from their own experience?



- Are your assessment questions inclusive? Do they refer to inclusive case studies? Do they perpetuate a certain view?
- Rather than offering special examination arrangements or additional time for specific students, can you offer an alternative assessment instead?

### **Inclusive Assessment**

Inclusivity is a very important factor in assessment design as fair assessment must reflect the needs of a diverse student body. In order to provide all students with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their learning, you need to consider the different means of demonstrating a particular learning outcome. Ensuring that students have variety in assessment and some individual choice, eg, in the topic or in the method/format of the assessment, can lead to overall enhancement of the assessment process to benefit all students.

Assessment procedures and methods must be flexible enough to allow adjustments to overcome any substantial disadvantage that individual students could experience.

Inclusive practice means:

- Ensuring that an assessment strategy includes a range of assessment formats
- Ensuring assessment methods are culturally inclusive
- Considering religious observances when setting deadlines
- Considering school holidays and the impact on students with family care responsibilities when setting deadlines
- Considering students' previous educational background and providing support for unfamiliar activities e.g., for students unused to group work

In most cases, institutions must ensure that the assessment evaluates learning outcomes and not the speed, manual dexterity, vision, hearing, or physical endurance of the learner.

### **Personalised learning and assessment**

Involving students in both their learning and assessment provides opportunities for them to influence their progress, and use their own preferred methods to access the curriculum. Contributing to the choice and design of assessments ensures that they are able to contribute fully no matter what their access needs are.

Self-assessment and peer assessment are also powerful motivational tools which can be used with most assessment techniques.

## **Making the most of assistive technologies**

Students should be allowed to use their own assistive technologies to access questions and evidence their answers. This benefits different students in different ways, for example:

- A student with motor impairments independently handling the exam paper
- Blind students accessing the assessment using a screen reader
- Students can personalise their view of the questions (e.g., font types, sizes, colours)
- Those with visual difficulties or dyslexia can adapt the appearance and layout of the text to make their reading more efficient and productive
- Text-to-speech software can read questions out loud - students who are dyslexic or visually impaired can independently access the meaning of the questions or accompanying resources. You will need to check that this software works well with any maths or science formulae.

Students can also check their own progress and get instant objective feedback which will help reinforce and embed learning. This may be particularly useful for those with short term memory problems and students on the autistic spectrum who may prefer automated feedback with limited personal interaction.

## **Evidence-based assessment**

Many professional associations such as those for medical, health and engineering now use evidence of achievement as qualification criteria for professional progression. This evidence is collated within a digital portfolio system or e-portfolio.

Using an e-portfolio enables individuals to demonstrate their competence in a personal and customised way. The restrictions of formalised testing are no longer barriers to the demonstration of achievement.

Sources of evidence can include documents produced as part of work activity, records as photographs or videos of the product or the process. Witness testimonies, assessor observations or authenticated candidate reports can be recorded using audio or video to validate the activity.

## **Barriers**

Although e-assessment has great potential for accessible experiences the potential is not always realised. This can be due to design faults in the questions, the quiz software or the delivery platform on which the quiz sits.

Different disabled learners experience different barriers; an e-assessment that works well for a dyslexic learner may be completely inaccessible to a blind learner. Some barriers (such as poor question design) can be addressed quite quickly but others, such as accessibility issues in the quiz software or the virtual learning environment on which it sits, can be more difficult to address.

## **Anonymous Marking**

Anonymous marking, sometimes called 'blind marking', is a system of assessment where the student's name is unknown to the assessor. The most common form of anonymous marking involves assigning students a number which is used instead of their name to identify their work throughout the assessment process. Research suggests that anonymous marking can help to reduce both the fear of and the likelihood of discrimination. Anonymous marking does not solve the problem of discrimination, but it is an important component of liberating the curriculum.

### ***REFLECTION ACTIVITY***

How can you make assessments more inclusive in your own institution?

Are there some new types of assessment that could be included on your current courses?

How does your institution cater for different groups of students, to ensure that they all have opportunities to demonstrate what they have learned?

## 5. Inclusive classrooms

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### **Your classroom**

Make sure that you consider the most effective layout of the room, and that all students are able to see you clearly and hear you clearly from where they are seated. You may need to use a microphone for large groups, especially in a noisy setting such as a workshop or laboratory. Lighting is also important – ensure that the room is adequately lit so that students can see you and your presentation, and also have sufficient lighting for note taking or other activities. This is especially important for deaf students (who need to see your face clearly) or for students with a visual impairment (who need to be able to read their notes),

The acoustics are also important – check for excessive background noise as this may make it difficult for some students to concentrate on your session.

If you have a student who uses a wheelchair, or who has mobility difficulties, check that the entrances, exits and seating / working arrangements are suitable. Some students may also need to use sound recording equipment during a lecture – check that they are sitting in an area of the room with good audibility / acoustics.

### **Making the most of technology**

Use blended learning resources to support what you are teaching in the classroom. Many students find these resources useful when preparing for an exam, or when working on their assignments. You might like to look at some of these platforms to get some ideas for your own subject area:

Khan Academy; <https://www.khanacademy.org/>

Future Learn: <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses>

Make your own resources using Screencastify, at: <https://www.screencastify.com/education/>

Develop your online skills with a free course such as this MOOC: <https://teaching.unsw.edu.au/learning-teach-online-mooc>

## **Group work**

When organising group work, allocate your students to groups rather than just letting them work with the same people each week. This will encourage all students to take part, and enable quieter / more reserved members of your class to feel more included. Give clear guidelines and roles to each group, so they are clear what is expected.

## **Encouraging participation**

Make sure that all your students can be easily heard and are encouraged to participate in your classes. Use techniques such as group activities, peer learning or group projects. Try to reduce the potential for discussion to be dominated by an individual or specific group of students, and make sure that everyone has a chance to participate. Some students may find group work quite challenging (e.g. a student with Asperger syndrome or a deaf student), so make sure that you take their learning preferences into account during the planning stage of any classroom activities.

## **Listening to what the students say**

Ask students to feed back to you about whether they feel included. For example, you could give out post-it in class for students to anonymously write down what they think is working well or could be improved. At the next session, you could follow up by suggesting some changes based on their feedback. This is particularly important when teaching a complex new theory, so that you can find out if everyone has understood what you are teaching.

## **Peer review of your class**

Ask a colleague if they would be willing to watch some of your teaching sessions and give you feedback. You can ask them to feed back on specific topics relating to inclusion, such as the design of your presentation; the way you are speaking; how you are explaining key topics; or identifying particular elements of your class that some students might have found difficult. See Appendix 1 for a proforma that you can use for classroom observations with your colleagues.

This publication gives some useful guidelines for peer review and observation of faculty:

[https://www.wvu.edu/teachinghandbook/evaluation\\_of\\_teaching/evalteaching\\_fac\\_peer\\_review.shtml](https://www.wvu.edu/teachinghandbook/evaluation_of_teaching/evalteaching_fac_peer_review.shtml)

## **Accessibility of your buildings**

The USA's National Disability Authority (2012) has published some useful guidelines regarding building and classroom accessibility, at: <http://nda.ie/nda-files/Improving-the-Accessibility-of-Schools.doc>.

# 6. Inclusive presentations

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## Examples of inclusive teaching methods from practice

In this chapter, specific examples of inclusive teaching methods will be represented. The examples come from experts in the field of working with people with disabilities. It is important to emphasise that the examples are presented through the fundamental characteristics of **inclusive presentations**, and, therefore, they will address certain disabilities.

One of the most significant characteristics of inclusive presentations is the **accessibility** they offer their audiences, including people with disabilities/difficulties.

### a. Presentation clarity

In the process of preparing a presentation, a teacher or a lecturer must always know whom they are making the presentation for.

At the beginning of each teaching or educational process, it is important that the teachers/lecturers clearly present themselves to the public and asks them to do the same. Through this approach, they give themselves the space needed for better familiarisation with the audience and for noticing whether the audience has certain disabilities for which it will be necessary to adjust their teaching/educational approach.

When we talk about presentation clarity itself, it is necessary for it to be **readable**:

- Concise – not too many words, but portraying the fundamental purpose of the topic the teacher/lecturer will talk about,
- The font size should be visible – in case there are visually impaired people present, enable printed copies of the presentation or the displayed text in larger letters,
- Not too many colors and animations diverting the attention from the lecturer,
- Comprehensibility and simplicity are important.
- Provide seats closer to the lecturer for the auditorium with hearing impairment (the lecturer should not turn their back on the public).

### b. Inclusive usage of the programme

All types of information technology (IT) programmes, that enable an accessible teaching method, are implied under inclusive usage of the programme. Some of them are Microsoft Office PowerPoint, videos,

computer and telephone applications, accessible websites, etc. In order to create an accessible presentation using Microsoft Office PowerPoint, it is necessary to follow certain steps:

PowerPoint presentations usually rely on a visual demonstration, so it will be easier for people who are blind or visually impaired to understand the content if the presenter pays attention to accessibility when creating them. The following suggestions will help you to design your presentations and lectures in a more inclusive way:

Content and design of your presentation	Suggestions for good practice
Use a large, legible font (at least size 28), and a simple sans-serif typeface	It is necessary to decrease the reading load for people with dyslexia or visual impairment. Reading can be made much easier for them by using the familiar sans-serif typefaces of fonts like Arial or Calibri. Avoid using only upper-case letters or a large amount of cursive or underlined text.
Keep the design as <b>simple as possible</b> and leave a sufficient amount of blank space.	Always have a sufficient amount of blank space between sentences and paragraphs.  People with dyslexia sometimes describe text as if it were “floating” on the page (since one line of the text blends into the line beneath it). They often see the text as blurred, connected or distorted.
Check your presentation with a colleague	Check that your presentation can be easily read and understood from the back of the classroom and adjust your timings / the design if needed.
Insert <b>alternative text</b> to describe any graphics or tables.  <b>Visual content</b> includes images, clip art, SmartArt graphics, shapes, groups, charts, embedded objects, manuscript and videos.	Alongside the alternative text, people who cannot easily see the screen will be able to understand what is important in the images and other visualisations.  Important information has to be transferred exclusively through the text displayed on the images. If an image containing text has to be used, it is necessary to state that text in the document.  In the alternative text, the image has to be briefly described, it should be mentioned that it contains text and its purpose has to be stated.
<b>Appropriate content sequence:</b> check if the slide content can be read in the imagined sequence.	People who, while reading the slide, see elements like text or images usually read in the sequence in which they appear on the slide. <b>A screen reader</b> , however, reads the slide elements in the sequence in which they are added to the slide. That sequence can significantly differ from the sequence in which elements are displayed, so may cause some confusion.  To make sure that everybody reads the content in the imagined sequence, you must check the reading sequence.
If a new slide is created, you can use <b>built-in slide designs</b> .	PowerPoint contains built-in slide sequences that you can apply to any slide. When used with a new slide, these sequences are automatically checked to see if the reading sequence is adjusted to all users.
Add meaningful <b>hyperlink text and screen tips</b> .	People who use screen readers can sometimes scan the list of hyperlinks. The links have to convey clear and precise information about the target. For example, the text Click <b>here</b> , should not be used as a link, but you should use the complete designation of the target page.  <b>Tip:</b> Screen tips appearing when the user holds the cursor on the text or images containing a hyperlink can also be added.
<b>Colour</b> should not be used as the only way of transferring information.	People who are blind, visually impaired, or cannot recognise colour can overlook the meaning transferred through certain colours.

	You can, for example, underline the hyperlink text in colour so the people who do not recognise colour know that the text represents a link, despite the fact that they do not see colour. Bold or larger fonts can be used for titles.
Use an appropriate level of <b>contrast</b> for the text and background colours.	There has to be a clear contrast between the text and the background so that visually impaired people can use the content. Use darker text on a white or light background, or white text on a dark background.  Black and white colour schemes simplify the difference between text and shapes for people who do not differentiate colours.
Check what the <b>print-out version</b> look like for your students	If you have poor colour contrast, students will find it difficult to read what they have printed out. Many students like to print out a presentation in advance of the lesson, so make sure the text and graphics are fully legible in print format.
Assign a <b>unique title</b> to each slide.	People who are blind, visually impaired or have difficulties reading use slide titles to go through the presentation. By glimpsing or using a screen reader, these persons can quickly look at the list of slide titles and go directly to the desired slide. This is also helpful for students who use your slides at a later date to revise for an exam.
Use a <b>simple table structure</b> and state the information in the column header.	Screen readers follow their position in the table by counting the table cells. If the table is nested in another table, or the cell is merged or split, the screen reader cannot count the cells further, and, beyond that, cannot provide useful information on the table. Empty cells in a table can lead the person using the screen reader to think that the table does not have any more contents.  <b>Screen readers for recognising rows and columns</b> also use information in the header.
Use <b>videos</b> that are accessible to people with hearing or visual impairments.	<i>Subtitles</i> usually contain a transcript (or a translation) of speech.  <i>Closed captions</i> usually also describe sounds happening outside the scene, such as music or sound effects. <i>Video description</i> implies verbal descriptions of the key visual elements in a video. The descriptions are inserted into pauses within speech. Video description makes the video accessible for people who are blind or visually impaired.

Taken from: <https://support.office.com/hr-hr/article/pristupačne-prezentacije-programa-powerpoint-6f7772b2-2f33-4bd2-8ca7-dae3b2b3ef25#PickTab=Windows>. Our translation.

### c. Inclusive teaching methods

This is a matter of creativity, acceptance and understanding without deviating from the content of the lecture. For example - you can make a “theatre” out of the classroom, use art, reviving their senses, better memory, you can change places, roles during the lecture...you can play “games” for improving the attention span, concentration...you can mix groups, the better ones help those who are less so, the more active help those who are less active...it is important not to play favourites, it is important to give praise, it is important to accept each solution, it is important that there is no right or wrong, it is important that they all learn from everyone...

Example:



- Finding functional advantages and abilities the student possesses to a smaller or larger extent (if the student has pronounced art abilities, the teacher should start an after-school art club where the student will have a special, significant role).
- Provide technical and material support (adaptive movement classes, work kits, sitting, special devices, apparatus, tools, magnifiers, etc.).

**d. Delivery speed/presentation speed**

Each lecturer/teacher has the most attention from their audience in the first 10 minutes of the presentation. Immediately after that, 30 minutes, the audience’s attention starts to drop. It is important that the lecturer shows the most important goals of their presentation at the very beginning, when the attention is at its highest, and animates its audience through images, videos, workshops, etc. near the end of the presentation.

Other important characteristics of the presentation delivery speed:

- Introduce a change within the presentation so as to keep the attention and interest of the hearers.
- Point out the end if you want to achieve the ending effect and full attention until then.
- Make “smart pauses”, for example, the lecturer defines a topic and gives the audience some time for critical thinking so as to engage within the topic when the lecture starts.
- In cases where there are students or adults with certain disabilities who, because of them, need more time, enable enough room for its accomplishment through workshops.

**REFLECTION ACTIVITY**

What do students say about my presentations?

Am I explaining key concepts or difficult topic in an accessible and inclusive way?

Are my all presentations and resources available to students electronically?

**Inclusive technologies**

Learning technologies can support inclusive practice in a variety of ways, including motivating learners and deepening their engagement in the learning process.

Technology can help learners achieve real gains in pursuing the qualifications that they need. Learning providers can use technologies to support competitiveness and social cohesion, to tackle inequities and to ensure accessibility in a safe environment for all learners (Becta 2008). It is becoming easier to learn in the workplace, home, classroom, community and even on the move, with access available in all these places to high quality digital resources.

Recent developments in technology for learning allow educators to reconsider basic teaching and learning methodologies and practice. They also mean learning can be personalised to meet the needs of increasingly discriminating learners, with greater choice supported by technology-based assessment and accreditation systems.

## 7. Inclusive resources

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Inclusion is a broad concept primarily implying the process of including people with different needs to make everybody feel as equal members of a community, with the goal of a more comfortable and happier life. This process is highly important and significant for the development of society, and, in order to make it as successful as possible, it needs to have participation from everyone because inclusion concerns us all. In a stage in life, growth, development and maturation, all individuals need help, understanding and acceptance because people are social beings who can hardly make it on their own. It is important to emphasise that inclusive groups are not only people with disabilities, but also many other categories encompassing a large number of the population (e.g. top athletes, mothers with students, talented students, students with no parent/s, etc.) because it additionally argues for the importance of this process, where empathy and solidarity towards differences that do not represent an obstacle, but wealth are needed. In order to enable equal opportunities for all, inclusive resources simplifying and facilitating the inclusion process are needed.

### a. Inclusive library

A library is a repository of knowledge, and, as such, it has to be adapted for use by all social and inclusive categories. Principally, it is necessary for the *entrance* to be accessible to all, which implies a *special entrance* for people with disabilities, and, it would also be desirable to have an *audible signalling device* for blind and visually impaired people. Within the library, there should be a separate room for using library materials. The interior of the library should be decorated in such a manner that everybody feels *comfortable* in it; that there is enough *light*, that there is peace and *quiet*, that the necessary tables adapted for *people in wheelchairs* are ensured. All library materials should also be *digitalised*. So, for example,

libraries can ensure a number of computers and/or tablet computers with *electronic books* - for the blind and visually impaired people, such books should be ensured in an audio file format. Electronic books on the computer and tablet computer can be of help to many other social and inclusive categories. An inclusive library equally supports all those who have profound and multiple learning difficulties, as well as those on many different parts of the autism spectrum. For example, an online system of “renting books” (sending books in PDF and audio file formats) can be a large time-saver and an additional inclusive opportunity. The library personnel have to be accommodating and pleasant, with a special approach that simplifies and helps in using the services and library resources. An inclusive library should be a learning area for the future which contains diverse literature, a selection of focused case studies, recognising mutual guidelines and ideas, as well as emphasising national and regional diversity. An inclusive library implies that it continually deals with the practical, efficient and developmental strategies.

### b. Inclusive reading lists/bibliographies

Specialised literature is an indispensable part of the teaching and educational process, and personal development in general. Books that (in)directly deal with inclusion should be compulsory reading in all educational institutions, but, of course, adapted to the level of education (e.g. visual imagery, comic books, etc. for lower levels of education). Learning about this process should start at the earliest age of secondary socialisation - the preschool. Inclusion has to be learned in primary, secondary and higher education institutions, in different ways, using different sources dealing with this topic. Each library should have a special inclusive list from which every teacher/professor should choose at least one book/source during a school/academic year. That library should be adapted and accessible to all social categories, and it should also have digital, PDF and audio file formats.

### c. Brochures, Worksheets and Teaching Materials

Raising awareness on the importance of the inclusion process is an important step in the inclusive process for society to understand the significance of this process. In order to stimulate empathy and solidarity, it is necessary to explain to the general public what is inclusion, why is it important that all individuals are equal in a social community and, finally, how to achieve it. Besides education, one of the ways of raising awareness is making interesting brochures that will draw the attention and intrigue the public. These brochures should definitely not have a lot of text, but one or several images with a memorable message which will stimulate a person's thought. They should also have specific instructions on what to do, or how to help (e.g. a link to a website, an invitation to a training course, a title of a book or a manual), etc.

A number of simple steps can be taken to make teaching materials more inclusive. Although many formatting recommendations are designed for the benefit of dyslexic students, these changes actually make the document more readable. Some of the ways that materials can be made more inclusive:

- Font: sans serif preferable (e.g. Arial or Comic sans)

- Font size: preferably a minimum of 12 unless an electronic version is easily available
- Justify: to the left margin only; always leave the right margin ragged
- Spacing: line spacing minimum of 1.5; check general spacing of the document for clarity and readability as well
- Important information: highlight using bolding the most important elements of a document
- Paper: print on off-white or pale coloured paper if possible ( for handouts)
- Organisation: use page numbers, clear headings, and labels
- Electronic format: make available whenever possible
- Label all photos and graphs clearly

#### d. Practical classroom resources

During class, the pupils/students gain and perfect knowledge, skills, habits, and develop certain psychological abilities. Teachers and professors should have a specific work approach adjusted to all the pupils/students they work with. Teaching is an extremely creative process, so teachers and professors have to keep track that, during work with pupils/students, they are always innovative, in line with the time period and technology so as to make it easier and more interesting for the pupils/students to be included in the education process. In teaching, it is desirable for the teacher/professor to use as many different work methods as possible, for example, alongside teaching, they should encourage and include all students in a *discussion* (whether they give the answers or comments themselves, or vote for an option/statement, e.g. they can use separate cards enabling deaf people to participate), use different *practical exercises* in line with the teaching unit that will make it easier for the pupils/students to adopt the material covered, use *video and audio files* that additionally explain the thematic units (e.g. a video with sound and interpretation), use *pair and group work* which would enable the pupils/students to develop team work, etc. It is important to offer students a wider worldview by giving them room to share their experiences and listen to the experiences of others. It is also important to offer them to manifestly try to put themselves in another person's shoes, open themselves to other cultures, nations, religions through certain case study workshops. The more different resources are used (e.g. presentations, magazines, creating their own maps in class, listening to other voices, having guest lecturers talk about the same theme from a different angle, etc.) the better the effect on raising the students' awareness on the unity of opposites.

For example, in a Sarajevo primary school "Osman Nakaš", there was a boy who could not hear from birth, and he also had difficulty talking. However, thanks to his teacher, he was not prevented from communicating with the other students in class, using sign language. The teacher organised a sign language course so as to enable the rest of the students to communicate and learn together.

The role of a teacher/professor is great. They primarily have to get to know the pupils/students they teach, and, after that, make an implementation plan for teaching, because not all classes/groups of students have the same needs, that is, difficulties, but they have the same goal and the same right - education!

### e. Specialised resources for students

One of the examples for specialised resources that can be used in education is an online system, that is, an online platform. Many institutions have already established this work system, however, in many cases, it is not completely accessible and adapted to all social and inclusive categories. In order to make an online platform as functional and as accessible to the largest possible number of students with different needs, it should have different teaching content that would imply: PowerPoint presentations, Word documents, audio lectures, instructions for tasks and homework, a bibliography, additional literature (books, video links, articles) and additional instructions that will simplify the education process for all pupils and students.

Each class, each group of students consists of different pupils/students, which is why it is necessary for the teacher/professor working with pupils/students to, at the very beginning of teaching in a school/academic year, make a group analysis based upon which they will make a special work strategy implying a specific approach, specific (inclusive) literature, specific practical and specialised resources adapted to the needs of all pupils/students they will work and cooperate with. Students love change and innovation in teaching, they love to be included and taught to express their opinions, attitudes and ideas without fear. It is important that a professor has a vision of his teaching unit, and adapts it to the group of students during the days of giving lectures. Sometimes, areas in a building can serve this purpose, and sometimes it is the areas outside of the building. In this way, the education process will be more interesting and more successful for both the pupils/students and the teachers/professors.

## 8. Inclusive trips and visits

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Study trips and visits can be an effective way to demonstrate an inclusive approach, as long as they are conducted in a purposeful and meaningful way, which allows everyone to exchange ideas and examine their practices. For example, students with mobility difficulties may not be able to access some areas on a visit (e.g. an international geology trip to a mountainous area), but their inclusion must still be taken into account so that they can fully benefit from the learning experiences on offer (Middlemas & Peat, 2015). In particular, video and audio equipment can contribute to a good experience for everyone involved, and all

students can be encouraged to contribute to the whole group's learning experiences. It should be noted that inclusion is always a priority at many institutions, so these trips and visits need to be thoughtfully planned.

### **a. Planning for an inclusive experience**

A good inclusive visit requires extensive planning and preparation, therefore it is important to pay special attention when selecting a suitable location. Choosing a location without sufficient research may detract from fulfilling the objectives of the trip or visit, so in that respect, we should carefully analyze the objectives, any health or safety issues, cultural context, transport costs, participants' needs, language, distance etc. It is advisable that we have a list of locations that we can choose from, based on specific criteria. This can be achieved through good advance planning and a preparatory visit to the location beforehand.

Next step is selecting participants, and it should be directly related to the objectives of the visit. Attention should be focused on variety of participants, not only on one group (for example only students, only academic staff or only senior staff). In this way we make sure to provide dissemination and wider impact of the activities. It is also preferable to set clear selection criteria, so that we clearly avoid the notion that the visit is some sort of academic tourism.

Choosing and managing the activities during the visit is a vital step in organising a successful and inclusive visit. Recording, sharing and use of the lessons learned should also be undertaken, so that participants are encouraged to take photos, make video, take notes etc, which they can compare during the reflection sessions afterwards. The reflection sessions are very valuable tool, since the participants can compare their understanding of the provided observations, which can lead to very interesting discussions and learning opportunities with any students who were unable to attend the visit.

### **b. Including everyone in the learning activities**

Inclusive trips and visits are intended for various groups of participants (students, academic staff, senior staff, etc), and planned activities should be aimed at providing inclusive learning experience for everyone. This essentially means not only attending the same activities, but also creating environment for providing genuine feedback from all participants, as well as structuring activities and preparing materials in an inclusive way. Also, if participants are required to complete some tasks, they should be allowed to submit their work in various ways (for example in writing, or to make a video or photos). In that way there is an inclusive correlation in presenting materials and producing feedback. Follow up activities are very important in order to maintain sustainability of the visit/trip results.

### **c. Students who cannot attend a trip / visit**

Students who cannot attend study trip / visit could still be included in trip or visit, in sense that handouts, videos or photographs can be presented to them. You may also be able to set up a live feed (e.g. on

camera or Skype). The learning outcomes / assessments should be as similar as possible, so that all students can aim for a good grade.

If students are unable to attend for financial reasons, the university should consider additional funding so that they have the chance to attend.

Reflection sessions and video materials are useful tools to transfer the experience to those students, and technology can facilitate the process. Also, the aforementioned activities can be considered as dissemination activities, because the main purpose of organizing the inclusive trips or visits is to foster exchange of the experiences and good practices. Participants should draw up an action plan to share what they have learned with goal to include as many stakeholders as possible, and assign persons responsible for completion of the activity. Technical support may also be required.

## 9. Inclusive admissions

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It is important to review your current admission arrangements, to see if you are being as inclusive as possible during the admissions process. These university websites offer a good range of sample policies and guidelines:

University College London: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/cam/sites/cam/files/migrated-files/international-recruitment-2012-2017.pdf>

Manchester University: <http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=11177>  
[https://www.cacee.com/er\\_disabilities.html](https://www.cacee.com/er_disabilities.html)

Rochester Institute of Technology: <https://www.rit.edu/emcs/oce/employer/recruiting-students-disabilities#Recruitment%20Strategies>

The University of St Andrews (UK) suggest that a good admissions policy will be able to:

- Identify areas where discrimination could potentially occur.
- Establish mechanisms to ensure the admissions process is consistent and non-discriminatory.
- Provide effective channels of communication to internal and external audiences.
- Regularly undertake reviews to assess and advance the effectiveness of policy and practice.

(University of St Andrews, see their website at: <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/hr/edi/inclusiveadmissions/> )

# 10. Further readings and resources

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## **Inclusive curriculum design**

Higher Education Academy (2018). 'Embedding equality and diversity in the curriculum: Developing a train the trainers model' (useful for programme leaders / senior management), at:

<https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/embedding-equality-and-diversity-curriculum-developing-train-trainers-model-0>

Higher Education Academy (2011). Inclusive curriculum design in higher education (with a range of examples from different disciplines) . At: <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/inclusive-curriculum-design-higher-education>

Strathclyde University (2005) Creating accessible course or programme design and structure for disabled students. At: [http://www.teachability.strath.ac.uk/chapter\\_2/reflectingonpractice2.html](http://www.teachability.strath.ac.uk/chapter_2/reflectingonpractice2.html)

University College Dublin (2017) 'Universal Design for Curriculum Design' at: <http://www.ucd.ie/all/supports/informationforstaff/stafftraininganduniversaldesign/>

University of Dundee (2017) 'Inclusive curriculum checklist', available at:

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/qf/documents/details/inclusive-curriculum-checklist-guidance-and-good-practice-example.php>

## **General advice for staff / faculty**

Equality Challenge Unit (2016). 'Inclusive learning and teaching: Providing support, adjustments and inclusive learning materials.' At: <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/guidance-resources/student-recruitment-retention-attainment/student-retention/inclusive-learning-teaching/>

Queen's University, Belfast (2010). 'Teaching For Inclusion In Higher Education: A Guide to Practice' at: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/AcademicStudentAffairs/CentreforEducationalDevelopment/UsefulInformation/Inclusion/>

Sheffield University (2012) 'The Inclusive learning and Teaching handbook'. At: [https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/polopoly\\_fs/1.18989!/file/The-inclusive-learning-and-teaching-handbook.pdf](https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.18989!/file/The-inclusive-learning-and-teaching-handbook.pdf)



University of Bath (2016). 'Inclusive Education Briefing: Small Groups and Tutorials'. At: [http://www.bath.ac.uk/learningandteaching/pdf/inclusive\\_education/Inclusive\\_Education\\_-\\_Small\\_Groups\\_x\\_Tutorials\\_Mar\\_2016.pdf](http://www.bath.ac.uk/learningandteaching/pdf/inclusive_education/Inclusive_Education_-_Small_Groups_x_Tutorials_Mar_2016.pdf)

University of Plymouth (2017) 'How can I be more inclusive? A list of tips and advice videos for academic staff about fostering inclusive teaching and learning environments.' At: <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/teaching-and-learning/inclusivity/how-can-i-be-more-inclusive>

### ***Inclusive assessment***

Chapman, C. (2015). 'Top Ten Tips on Inclusive Assessment' at: <http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk/learning-at-university/assessment/top-10-tips-on-inclusive-assessment/>

Equality Challenge Unit (2010). 'Managing reasonable adjustments in higher education'. At: <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/external/managing-reasonable-adjustments-in-higher-education.pdf>

JISC (2016). 'Transforming assessment and feedback with technology' <https://www.jisc.ac.uk/guides/transforming-assessment-and-feedback/inclusive-assessment>

Sheffield Hallam University (2016) 'Accessible Assessment – An Inclusive Practice Guide' (useful advice re students with disabilities) <https://blogs.shu.ac.uk/accessibleassessment/>

Waterfield, J. & West, B. (2006) Inclusive Assessment in Higher Education: A Resource for Change (The SPACE Project) . The Student Staff Partnership for Assessment Change and Evaluation (SPACE project, HEFCE).

### **Inclusive use of Moodle / other e-learning ideas**

Bath University (2016) 'Inclusive Education Briefing: Using Moodle', at: [http://www.bath.ac.uk/learningandteaching/pdf/inclusive\\_education/Inclusive\\_Education\\_-\\_Using\\_Moodle\\_Mar\\_2016.pdf](http://www.bath.ac.uk/learningandteaching/pdf/inclusive_education/Inclusive_Education_-_Using_Moodle_Mar_2016.pdf)

Methodist Church (2017) 'Moodle for Beginners' (a useful example of how you might introduce your virtual learning environment to new students / staff). At: <http://www.methodist.org.uk/for-ministers-and-office-holders/local-preachers-and-worship-leaders/worship-leading-preaching/worship-foundations/moodle-for-beginners/>

Oxford Brookes University (2017). 'Access to teaching materials before lectures, seminars, practical classes and other teaching sessions' at: <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/Documents/Staff/Academic/Inclusion/Access-to-teaching-materials-before-lectures/>

### **Examples of university policy on inclusive and accessible approaches to learning and teaching**

University of Edinburgh (2018). At: [https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/accessible\\_and\\_inclusive\\_learning\\_policy.pdf](https://www.ed.ac.uk/files/atoms/files/accessible_and_inclusive_learning_policy.pdf)

University of Manchester (2018). At: <http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=24540>

University of Reading (2017). At:

[http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/files/qualitysupport/Policy\\_on\\_Inclusive\\_Practice\\_in\\_Teaching\\_and\\_Learning.pdf](http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/files/qualitysupport/Policy_on_Inclusive_Practice_in_Teaching_and_Learning.pdf)

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Bath University (2016) 'Inclusive Education Briefing: Using Moodle', at: [http://www.bath.ac.uk/learningandteaching/pdf/inclusive\\_education/Inclusive\\_Education\\_-\\_Using\\_Moodle\\_Mar\\_2016.pdf](http://www.bath.ac.uk/learningandteaching/pdf/inclusive_education/Inclusive_Education_-_Using_Moodle_Mar_2016.pdf)

Becta (2008). Technology Strategy for Further Education, Skills and Regeneration: Implementation plan for 2008-2011. [publications.becta.org.uk/display.cfm?resID=36018&page=1835](http://publications.becta.org.uk/display.cfm?resID=36018&page=1835)

Bui, Quirk, Almazan, and Valenti, (2010)

Chapman, C. (2015). 'Top Ten Tips on Inclusive Assessment' at: <http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk/learning-at-university/assessment/top-10-tips-on-inclusive-assessment/>

Equality Challenge Unit (2010). 'Managing reasonable adjustments in higher education'. At: <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/external/managing-reasonable-adjustments-in-higher-education.pdf>

Equality Challenge Unit (2016). 'Inclusive learning and teaching: Providing support, adjustments and inclusive learning materials.' At: <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/guidance-resources/student-recruitment-retention-attainment/student-retention/inclusive-learning-teaching/>

Frank D. Golom (2018) *Alternate Conversations for Creating Whole-System Change around Diversity and Inclusion*. Available at: <https://www.aacu.org/diversitydemocracy/2018/winter/golom>

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# Appendix 1: Samples of workshop handouts to use with Faculty / Teachers

<b>Checklist for inclusive teaching (university version)</b>		
<b>Planning</b>	<b>Yes ✓</b>	<b>Why do you think this is important?</b>
Does the lesson content clearly align with the learning objectives and the assessments of the programme/module?		
Are the learning objectives of each taught session made explicit to students? E.g. in terms of inclusion in module handbooks and on PowerPoint slides and handouts.		
Have the learning objectives been prioritised so that important topics have more focus placed upon them than minor topics?		
Is there a progression in the complexity of learning tasks (from tasks which require students to describe or summarise to tasks which ask students to critique or evaluate) over the duration of the module?		
Do you build in opportunities to evaluate student learning during the taught sessions? And mid-module?		
Do you ensure that key materials (lecture outline, key vocabulary and a brief summary of the session) are available electronically to students at least 3-4 days in advance?		
Are you fully aware of the learning needs of all the students in your group, e.g. international students; disabled students; mature students?		
Have resources been digitised where necessary?		
Are any video or YouTube clips accessible, providing captions, transcripts or audio described versions where required? Are all photos clearly labelled?		
<b>The learning environment</b>	<b>Yes ✓</b>	<b>Why is this important?</b>
Have you taken the physical environment into account, to ensure that it is as fit for purpose as possible? (levels of lighting, distance between lecturer and students, acoustics, distractions, visibility of screens, flexible seating arrangements)?		
Is there easy access for any wheelchair users or those with mobility issues?		
Have you asked students what they think about the learning environment? Do they have any suggestions for organising the room / laboratory differently?		
<b>Teaching Methods</b>	<b>Yes ✓</b>	<b>Why is this important?</b>
Do you cater for different learning preferences? (lectures, small group discussions, work in pairs, individual work)		
Are your students aware of their own preferred ways of learning / remembering?		
Do you provide an overview or summary of the lesson content?		

Do you use a range of range of presentation techniques (e.g. charts, diagrams, pictures, video clips) to accommodate different learning preferences?		
Do you break the lecture, tutorial or laboratory work into manageable chunks to allow students time to process information?		
Do you let the students talk to each other about any new / unfamiliar concepts during class?		
Do you give students the opportunity to ask questions during the session?		
Do you provide a glossary of new terms / phrases in an accessible format 3-4 days in advance of the session?		
Do you speak clearly, avoid the use of slang, colloquialisms, and jokes, which may offend or not be understood?		
Do you make clear links between the different parts of a lesson?		
<b>Teaching Methods</b>	Yes ✓	<b>Why is this important?</b>
Do you explain and rephrase difficult concepts and encourage students to use these during the class to ensure understanding?		
Do you regularly build in activities during your session to test what students have learned?		
Is your verbal feedback specific and constructive? Do the students understand what you are telling them?		
Do you ensure that you face students when you speak to them; can your face be seen at all times when you are speaking?		
Do you explain how to pronounce unfamiliar surnames / formulae / foreign words?		
If you are hand writing any text, is it very clear and easily visible from all areas of the room?		
<b>Teaching Materials</b>	Yes ✓	<b>Why is this important?</b>
Do you limit the amount of text / graphics on a PowerPoint slide or other visual resources?		
Do colour contrasts on slides and videos ensure that the graphics / photos are easily visible to all viewers?		
Are any presentations (e.g. in PowerPoint) also available as print versions, and fully legible when printed in black and white?		
Is the font used in digital and paper-based material easy to read? (Background colours of slides and fonts should be double checked. Use sans serif fonts such as Verdana, Calibri, Arial or Comic Sans)		
Is the font used in visuals (or on flipcharts / whiteboards) large enough to be read from all parts of the room?		
Do you have adequate spacing between lines of text?		

Do you use short simple sentences / blocks of text in the text for PowerPoint or other visual resources?		
Do you use high-frequency vocabulary in the text for PowerPoint or other visual resources?		
Do you use diagrams, tables and charts to clarify verbal explanations? E.g. Highlight in bold and change colour of new vocabulary / terms so students can easily identify these on the slide.		
<b>Assessment and Feedback</b>	Yes ✓	<b>Why is this important?</b>
Do you provide opportunities for students to give feedback to you on the module and its assessment, both during and at the end of the module?		
Do you set guidelines and clear boundaries (e.g. for in-class debates or group work) and make target / goal expectations explicit?		
Do you take a considered approach to managing group work, particularly for students with Asperger syndrome and autism?		
Do you make it clear to students what you are assessing? Do they understand the assessment criteria?		
Do you have a range of assessment methods? Do these help students to achieve success on your module?		
Do you have exemplars of each assessment method that you are using? Are students clear how to achieve success?		
Are your assessment tasks flexible to allow for those with certain disabilities to present their work in different ways?		
Are your assessment tasks aligned to your learning outcomes, so that they measure student learning?		
Do you check the SoA report for students with exam adjustments at least 2 weeks before any assessments?		
Have you referred to the guidelines for marking the work of students with specific learning differences?		
Is your formative feedback given in time for students to be able to use it to enhance their summative assessment?		
Is your summative feedback timely i.e. within 20 days of submission?		
Do you offer students any suggestions about how to plan their assignments / manage their workloads?		
<b>E-learning , technology and social media</b>		<b>Why is this important?</b>
Does your Moodle site / website adhere to current web accessibility guidelines (e.g. W3C guidelines at: <a href="https://www.w3.org/WAI/intro/accessibility.php">https://www.w3.org/WAI/intro/accessibility.php</a> )		
Does your Moodle site include clear links to academic writing support / workshops / library support / tutorial arrangements etc?		
Do you track student visits to your Moodle site? What do you do when students do not engage with your Moodle resources?		
Are all your students familiar with the software needed to complete their assignments; and are they aware where to access support to improve their IT skills?		
Are you making full use of equipment such as a docucam / visualiser to reinforce learning?		

Do you offer support students on the effective use of software (e.g. SPSS, NVIVO, GIS software etc) where this is a required part of the taught programme?		
Are your students aware of planning software to help them with essay / dissertation planning (e.g. mind mapping software such as Inspiration)		
Are digital photos and graphs clearly labelled with an explanation of the content?		
Do you record or allow students to record your lectures? Do you need any training in this area?		

LTEU Workshop – Inclusive approaches to learning and teaching.

Adapted from: The University of Monash (2009). *Inclusive Teaching*. <http://www.monash.edu.au/lts/inclusivity/>



## Appendix 2. Creating an inclusive curriculum

Several components relate to creating an inclusive curriculum, and the statements provide an idea about the types of actions that institutions could take to move towards an inclusive curriculum (May & Thomas, 2010):

### **Component 1: Curriculum Design**

- Learning outcomes and/or competence standards do not adversely impact upon or discriminate against particular students or groups
- Curriculum content is sensitive and varied, informed by different social and cultural perspectives and builds on students' educational interests, experiences, and aspirations
- Programmes provide a range of learning and teaching approaches that take account of the diversity of students and build effective working relationships.
- Curriculum is designed to provide a range of assessment and feedback approaches. The institution provides sufficient organizational flexibility in all programmes to accommodate student diversity and individual pathways.
- Programmes are routinely assessed to ensure that equality groups are not adversely affected.
- Staff have access to information, advice, and guidance in order to design an inclusive curriculum.

### **Component 2: Curriculum Delivery**

- Learning is student-centred and interactive, engaging all students through a range of methods.
- The materials, resources, and examples provided positively embrace the diversity of students' backgrounds, interests, experiences, and aspirations.
- Learning materials are available in sufficient time and in different formats.
- Staff offer flexibility in curriculum delivery to enable all students to participate.
- Staff review incorporates inclusive curriculum delivery.

## Appendix 3. 10 Point Checklist for Inclusive Curriculum Design (university version)

Adapted from the University of Dundee (2017)

Checklist items	✓	Observations and action points
1. All staff (academic and support) involved in the programme have completed the University's mandatory training on inclusion, equality and diversity, and are aware of policy in this area.		
2. Curriculum development has taken account of a diverse range of viewpoints, from students as well as staff and other stakeholders.		
3. The learning environment promotes equality of opportunity in class as well as in the assessments used		
4. The learning outcomes are realistic, and achievable for all students		
5. Curriculum content reflects an appropriate range of cultural and political perspectives.		
6. An appropriate range of teaching approaches is used, in class as well as online		
7. Strategies are in place to engage all students in class activities, and to allow the student body to integrate with one another.		
8. Assessment methods take account of the range of needs and backgrounds of the student body.		
9. Feedback given to students on their work is sensitive to the need to maintain the dignity of the individual; and supports each student's future progress		
10. Where used, visits, placements, internships and periods of learning abroad have been scrutinised in relation to inclusion, equality and diversity issues.		

## Appendix 4. Discussion Activity for Faculty

### Designing inclusive assessments

- How inclusive are the assessment methods currently used on your programme?
- What do your students think of assessment and feedback on your programme?
- Do your students know how to improve their work for the next time they do a similar assessment?
- What are the key challenges for assessment / marking / feedback on your programme?
- Are your assignment briefings timely, understandable and useful? How many do you have each term?
- Regarding assessment, do you consider that you provide adequate information to students? Is this also available electronically?
- How do your current assessment methods help students to fully engage in your discipline area? Do some groups of students always succeed better than others?
- Do students get the chance to try different assessment methods over the course of the programme? (e.g.
- What would students say about your support mechanisms / tutorial advice / writing workshops / library support etc? Are all students able to easily access this support?
- How can you work with all your students to enhance their motivation and enthusiasm for learning?
- Is there something you might do differently next term / next year?

## Appendix 5. Equipment and software suppliers

**Please check availability and technical support available in your local area. Inclusion in this list does not imply a recommendation from the INCLUSION project.**

1. Kurzweil Education - provides literacy solutions, tools & training for those with learning differences and challenges, or people with blindness or partially sighted. <https://www.kurzweiledu.com/default.html>
2. Live scribe 3 smart pen - Bluetooth Smart to send everything you write to your smartphone or tablet. <https://www.livescribe.com/en-us/smartpen/l3/>
3. Keyboards with large print or high contrast lettering - They are the same size as standard keyboards, they just have a larger print on each key. <https://nerdtechy.com/best-large-print-keyboard>
4. Touchscreen - Provides a more direct connection between action and result. [https://www.arbor-technology.com/Event/Industrial-Panel-PC/index.html?gclid=EAIaIQobChMI1rPxObk2wIVjoKyCh2xBggjEAAAYASAAEgKYbfD\\_BwE](https://www.arbor-technology.com/Event/Industrial-Panel-PC/index.html?gclid=EAIaIQobChMI1rPxObk2wIVjoKyCh2xBggjEAAAYASAAEgKYbfD_BwE)
5. Braille cells printer - Printer embosses data as tactile Braille cells, thus allowing Blind users to read any document. <http://www.afb.org/prodBrowseCatResults.aspx?CatID=45>
6. Eye controlled device - peripheral eye tracker that enhances computer accessibility with the speed, power and accuracy of gaze interaction. The device replaces the standard mouse, allowing you to navigate and control a desktop or laptop computer using only your eyes. <https://www.tobii.com/group/about/this-is-eye-tracking/>
7. Transmitter - designed for use by teachers in both regular schools for the hearing-impaired. The device facilitates communication for persons with hearing impairments and is especially useful during noisy situations: classes, discussions, etc. <http://earcommunity.org/hearing-loss/fm-transmitters/>
8. Streamer - The Streamer is intended to be used by wireless Oticon hearing instrument users together with their hearing instruments. The Streamer is a communication interface between the hearing instruments and other devices. The alternative is COMFORT CONTEGO. [www.oticon.global/hearing-aid-users/hearing-aids/accessories/connectline](http://www.oticon.global/hearing-aid-users/hearing-aids/accessories/connectline)
9. FM system transmitter - consists of a transmitter microphone used by the speaker (such as the teacher in the classroom, or the speaker at a lecture) and a receiver used by you, the listener. The receiver transmits the sound to your ears or, if you wear a hearing aid, directly to the hearing aid. <https://www.healthyhearing.com/help/assistive-listening-devices/fm-systems>

10. Hearing loop - works the same as a television remote control does. It sends invisible infrared light to the device. The infrared hearing loop has one big advantage over other systems. It does not permeate walls, ceilings, or other obstacles. This means that a conversation, a lecture, or any other spoken word stays within the room. Each room in a building has total privacy from any other area in the building.  
<https://www.hearinglink.org/living/loops-equipment/hearing-loops/what-is-a-hearing-loop/>
11. MAGic - screen magnification and screen reading solution for low vision computer users. MAGic can help you work more efficiently with business applications, documents, email, navigating the Internet, and engaging in social networking. MAGic delivers smooth, crisp letters, even at the highest magnification levels. <https://www.freedomscientific.com/Downloads/Magic/MagicWhatsNew>
12. Screen reader JAW - developed for computer users whose vision loss prevents them from seeing screen content or navigating with a mouse. JAWS provides speech and Braille output for the most popular computer applications on your PC.  
<https://www.freedomscientific.com/Products/Blindness/JAWS>
13. Sonocent audio notetaker - captures full recordings of classes and meetings and to work with that audio. The software makes recordings of speech a real, tangible thing, by visualizing audio as chunks, phrase-by-phrase. <https://www.sonocent.com/en-us/audio-notetaker>
14. Overlays – Colored for dyslexia/Irlen Syndrome/ADHD/Autism - are the only colored overlays available backed by more than a decade of scientific research and used by more than 4,000 school districts worldwide. <http://irlen.com/colored-overlays/>
15. Inspiration – Mind Mapping - takes notes, organize information, and structure writing for plans, papers and reports, use the integrated Outline View to focus on main and supporting ideas and to clarify thinking in written form. With Inspiration's Presentation Manager, transform your diagrams, mind maps and outlines into polished presentations that communicate ideas clearly and demonstrate understanding and knowledge.  
<http://www.inspiration.com/>
16. Alternative mouse – Ergonomic mouse, trackball, joysticks, touchpad, foot mouse  
<https://www.nhs.uk/accessibilityhelp/Alternative-mice.html>
17. Dragon Naturally Speaking - takes voice command to the next level with enhanced features for greater accuracy and speed when creating documents, emailing, searching the web and more - at work, school, on the go, or in the office. [https://shop.nuance.com/store?Action=Custom&Locale=en\\_US&PID=8481714&SiteID=nuanceus&bpag=resp-dragon-naturallyspeaking-premium-13](https://shop.nuance.com/store?Action=Custom&Locale=en_US&PID=8481714&SiteID=nuanceus&bpag=resp-dragon-naturallyspeaking-premium-13)
18. C-Pen Reader - a scanning pen that displays a word definition and reads text aloud to support dyslexic students and adults with reading difficulties. <https://www.dyslexic.com/product/c-pen-reader/>

19. Franklin DMQ 2110 Collins Speaking Reference Library - Improve your spelling and vocabulary with Phonetic spell-correction, from “nolij” to “knowledge” in an instant. Use the Confusables vocabulary aid to identify and define commonly confused spellings. <https://www.dyslexic.com/product/franklin-dmq-2110-collins-speaking-reference-library/>

## Appendix 6

### Main Conclusions and findings of the Literature Review

University of Graz, 2017

#### Introduction

More than 200 papers and publications were reviewed in the first year of the INCLUSION Project. This Appendix gives a good overview of the main themes and discussions that emerged.

#### 1) General Literature on the Social Dimension of the Bologna Process and Inclusive Education

##### Social Dimension (SD) Bologna Process

- The SD still has low popularity based on the fact that social fairness seems to be a problematic and unproductive matter. Still, solving the problem of equal chances on high education access seems to be the best way to ensure social advancement. The SD as it is framed now seems however, to be stabilizing ongoing inequality, requiring an evaluation of education policies and their effects in the EHEA.
- Measures making the social dimension empirically tangible could include (as suggested by the Bologna Process Working Group)
  - Measures to promote equal opportunities for access, participation and completion;
  - Measures to widen access to and participation in higher education,
  - Study environment that enhances the quality of the student experience;
  - Student participation in the governance and organisation of higher education
  - Adequate finances in order to start and complete studies

##### General literature on the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) – National Policy Level

• All countries in the EHEA have to develop a coherent set of policy measures to address participation in higher education which identify underrepresented groups in higher education and outline specific, measurable actions (see above) to improve access, participation and completion for those groups, consistent with national approaches. National policies with regard to inclusive higher education shall thus include:

- Cooperation with higher education institutions and other relevant stakeholders to identify underrepresented groups and the barriers to access, participation and completion;
- Development of strategies to overcome identified barriers and set objectives for underrepresented groups and the elimination of barriers;
- Outlined actions for both the national and institutional level;
- Arrangements for the systematic collection of relevant comparable data, making optimal use of existing resources, to enhance the evidence base for policy development and enable the effective monitoring of the common objectives on access, participation and completion among under-represented and disadvantaged groups in higher education.
- Very few EU member countries integrated relevant measures into a coherent national strategy. As a consequence, systematic approaches of identifying barriers into and within the higher education system based on reliable data remain insufficient or missing.

In order to overcome these challenges a European strategy and guidelines for national action plans have been developed to support members in their efforts to develop a coherent set of policy measures and effective national plans or strategies to ensure greater access to quality higher education for non-traditional learners and students from disadvantaged backgrounds:

### **Widening Participation for Equity and Growth - A Strategy for the Development of the Social Dimension and Lifelong Learning in the European Higher Education Area to 2020.**

The aim of the guidelines is to assist countries to meet the challenge of developing or enhancing national plans or strategies, they serve as a roadmap for member countries in the EHEA to ensure that national plans or strategies are developed using a systematic approach to identifying barriers into and within the higher education system, based on relevant data providing evidence for action.

The guidelines foresee to:

1. Set up a coherent and inclusive process (Involve higher education institutions, student representatives and all other relevant stakeholders, but also to consult with the pre-tertiary education system (schools, vocational education)).
2. Set general objectives. (The national advisory or consultation structure should agree on short-term (3-4 years) and long-term (10-15 years) national objectives).
3. Analyse the current position. This step involves the analysis of two different but critical elements: A) an analysis of the student population entering, participating in and completing higher education and B) cataloguing the existing measures designed to promote the social dimension.
4. Identify data gaps and ways to overcome them. (Data gaps should be taken into account and ways to close these gaps should be considered for the future.)
5. Identify barriers to access, participation and completion in higher education. (Once the detailed composition of the student population has been compared to the general population, certain groups can be identified as being underrepresented either in the whole higher education system or in certain sub-areas of the system. Usually, the barriers are multidimensional and therefore appear sometimes vague, unclear and difficult to designate.)
6. Contrast existing measures with identified barriers. (The following kinds of questions should be discussed: Do the measures catalogued in Step three address the identified barriers in a comprehensive way? Are these measures effective, at least in the long-run? If the measures being taken are effective, why do the barriers continue to exist? What additional actions/initiatives are needed to overcome them?)
7. Develop strategies to overcome these barriers. Strategies to overcome the barriers to effective participation in higher education may include:
  - Provision for the development of *proactive strategies at institutional level*, including lifelong learning and outreach activities, provision of information on educational and labour market-related opportunities and outcomes, guidance on appropriate course choice and skills acquisition and other supports;
  - Develop *transparent progression routes* into higher education from vocational and other types of education based on the implementation of national qualifications frameworks linked to the overarching framework for qualifications in the EHEA;
  - Support the development and implementation of *student-centred approaches* to teaching and learning. This includes measures to increase opportunities for flexible learning through diversifying modes of delivery of learning content, including through part-time provision, modularisation of programmes and distance learning through the effective use of e-learning and open education resources.



- Address the overall structure of institutional *funding, fees and student financial supports*. How can financial supports best be targeted to achieve national objectives for access, participation and completion?

8. Implement a follow-up process and set specific targets.

9. Restart the process.

If a member country has adopted measures that address barriers for underrepresented groups, is monitoring the effectiveness of its policies on access, participation and completion and has addressed the need for data collection, then this can be considered equivalent to a national plan or strategy.

One project aimed at strengthening the social dimension and inclusive higher education has been the “*Peer Learning Initiative for the Social Dimension (PL4SD) project*”. Its activities aimed to encourage policy-makers and stakeholders in higher education to further develop peer learning for the social dimension and to educate policy-makers and stakeholders on the various approaches for addressing the social dimension and the possibilities of peer learning.

One outcome of the project was the PL4SD database ([www.pl4sd.eu](http://www.pl4sd.eu)) with good practices and examples regarding the implementation of the SD across the EHEA;

Furthermore, country reviews on the SD (Armenia, Croatia, Lithuania) are supposed to provide a basis and example for the development of national strategies on the SD. The objective of the reviews is to assist the analysed country in the development of a coherent and effective national strategy for improving the social dimension of higher education. The country reviews focus in particular on:

- Systematic data collection in HE in general and on the SD in particular;
- Merit vs needs-based support,
- Inequalities in pre-tertiary education which impact on access to HE,
- Lack of alternative routes for entry into HE;
- Social situation of students;
- National targets for underrepresented groups
- Division between vocational and academic education paths

### **Criticisms**

Due to diverging interests of the member countries in the EHEA and the diverging priorities set by the states with regard to the social dimension of the Bologna process all attempts to harmonise state activities have not brought the expected results (inter alia the Open Method of Coordination (OMC)).

Especially the lack of comparable data resulting from different perceptions on the social dimension impede truly coherent approaches within the EHEA.

### **Inclusive education in universities – Projects related to HE in HE institutes**

- In order to guarantee inclusive education as the expression of every citizen having a basic human right to life-long learning, HE institutions have to aim towards the inclusion of under-represented populations as students but also at the leadership and decision making level.
- Inclusive education is in the fundamental interest to do so. Addressing inclusivity is central to remaining an educational institution in an environment where technology and globalization - through creating markets for educational services are reforming universities as corporations which adopt corporate competitive values.
- HEI's have to have a clear definition of the term “inclusive”, particularly the coverage of the definition to include, in addition to disabled students, also other disadvantaged students such as those living in remote areas. Once having decided a definition:

- o It is critical to *engage the senior management* of HEIs to implement inclusion strategies at the University level. A useful way to gain commitment by the senior management level is to tag the objectives of the project onto ongoing commitments such as improving student experience.
- o For projects related to the inclusion of underrepresented groups at HEI it is important to *engage staff* from an early level on in the project including a piloting effort and scoping staff and senior management commitment before the start of the project.
- o *Effective communication* is necessary to make sure that the staff who is not directly engaged in the implementation of cultural change project “sees the evidence of the need for project activities and that the aims and objectives of projects align with existing ways of working”.

The lack of resources and of effective funding mechanisms may impede the implementation of such changes projects aim to bring.

## 2) Group-specific literature

### Students with Disabilities

- Appropriate design of the infrastructure of HEI to ensure full accessibility of physical facilities is crucial for inclusive education, but not sufficient.
- It is important that universities consider the especially sensitive transition of students with disabilities during their first year and even the first weeks of attendance. The university should be proactive in transition planning to avoid early leaving and to foster academic success for students with disabilities. This can be achieved via special orientation sessions, tutorials (e.g. assigning a student in a higher year or an instructor as a counsellor) or having reference persons or groups related to the disability among the faculty.
- University faculty have to possess the necessary knowledge and skills on how to teach students with special needs. In this context, universities should provide appropriate training course for the faculty
- Students with disabilities generally have lower incomes than their peers without disabilities. These students rely on the same federal, state, and institutional programs that serve low- income students generally. Therefore, their opportunities have been diminished by the inadequate levels of financial aid, particularly grants that affect all low-income students. In addition, it is expensive for low-income students with disabilities to meet the special needs associated with daily life and academic life. These additional costs are often not met because financial aid funds are limited or the financial need of students with disabilities exceeds the maximum awards in various programmes.
- Students with disabilities also generally need more time for self-care, daily living, and academic tasks than their peers without disabilities. This results in students with disabilities taking twice as long to complete their degrees as their peers without disabilities. The longer time that students with disabilities need to complete their studies increases their costs and the financial barriers they face.
- Whilst students now have an expectation that their voice will be listened to in relation to the quality of their higher education, many institutions are embracing the opportunities of engaging students as partners in their higher education. Through meaningful and sustainable involvement, HEIs can achieve a truly inclusive learning environment to the benefit of all students and the institution itself.

### 3) Country specific literature

#### Kosovo

Existence of significant challenges in the implementation of the Social Dimension arising with regard to policy, financial, institutional and personal issues negatively affecting equal opportunities for all in higher education.

Key recommendations to overcome challenges for the implementation of SD in Kosovo include the following:

#### a) Recommendations addressing legislators and higher education authorities:

- Consider key issues related to the Social Dimension of the Bologna Process in the current process of rewriting the legal framework; draft a National Strategy for the Bologna Social Dimension;
- Establish a sustainable system providing reliable and accurate data and information on education of underrepresented groups;
- Raise awareness on the Social Dimension in higher education and its practical implications among students, HEIs and HE authorities; address also cultural barriers and stereotypes, in particular among the Roma community and in rural areas of Kosovo; also strengthen career guidance services at pre-university level of education.
- Implement measures that improve the quality of higher education provision for all, including targeted measures that increase opportunities for underrepresented groups.
- Design and implement policies and measures to alleviate administrative and legal obstacles (such as recognition of documents) for members of non-majority communities and for students attending the parallel system of education.

#### b) Recommendations addressing higher education institutions and teaching staff

- Implement awareness building measures to improve the understanding and requirements in the implementation of the Social Dimension.
- Design and implement an institutional plan of action for better implementation of measures in the field of Social Dimension.
- Provide more study programmes in languages of minority communities and in English language to diversify provision in Kosovo higher education as a means of preventing members of minority communities from leaving Kosovo as a result of lack of study programmes in their languages.
- For HEIs to develop a scheme of incentives for teaching staff providing individual and group support to underrepresented groups (e.g. through mentoring).
- Implement measures that address the needs of underrepresented and vulnerable groups (eg stipends, career counselling service, provision of transport etc.)

#### c) Recommendations addressing civil society organizations

Civil Society organizations can play a unique role in:

- Building awareness and disseminating information among all stakeholders including authorities, community political organizations and NGOs, rural population, community and higher education institutions;
- Addressing cultural issues and causes behind underrepresentation and marginalization;
- Serving as a bridge between authorities and underrepresented groups and at the same time
- Acting as a currently missing voice for underrepresented groups in HE;
- Monitoring if adequate implementation of government policies is taking place, including for enrolment quota, scholarships and stipends, etc.

- d) Recommendations addressing students/student unions : Participants identified a great potential for increased engagement of students and student organizations which could greatly contribute to the implementation of the Social Dimension in higher education: They could play a role by:
- Providing peer support for students members of the Roma community and members from other vulnerable groups to increase their academic performance, participation in and benefits from higher education;
  - Increasing inclusion and voice of underrepresented groups in their student organizations;
  - Engaging in dissemination of information on the Social Dimension

### Croatia

- In Croatia like in other countries there is a strong relationship between the performance of students and the **socio-economic status** of schools. Unemployment and education levels: an uprising trend in the share of unemployed young people since the beginning of the economic crisis in 2008/09.
- Looking at the representation rates of **different societal groups**, the review team notes that students coming from family backgrounds with lower levels of education are more likely to have a delayed transition into higher education compared to their peers and they are also more likely to enrol in higher numbers in professional studies.
- Women in Croatia have attained higher educational levels than men. At the same time though, there are considerably more women than men that have only completed lower education.
- Legal Framework: 2007, the Act on Student Council and other Student Organisations strengthened the role of the student in higher education governance. Also, the quality of higher education has been addressed within the last decade through the establishment of the Agency for Science and Higher Education (AZVO), responsible for quality assurance in higher education, and the passing of the Law on Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education (2009).
- *The Croatian Qualifications Framework Act (MSES 2013)* defines and describes Croatia's system of qualifications, learning outcomes and competences and thereof resulting professional profiles. It aims at improving opportunities of lifelong learning and second-chance access to higher education. Furthermore, it refers to social equality and equity in its principles and objectives (Article 3, CROQF). A most recent draft of a *Strategy for Education, Science and Technology* - profoundly referring to the social dimension - is currently debated in Parliament.
- Croatian higher education legislation does not specifically define target groups. Following category of students are defined as underrepresented groups in various steering documents on higher education: Roma minority, students with special needs, students from rural areas and students from single parent families, mature students, students affected by the War of Independence, students with lower socio-economic status, students with full-time employment and students without parental care.
- Research has shown that students from **underrepresented groups** are more pessimistic about the options regarding participating in higher education. For this reason, one of the main goals for improving the equality of opportunities and the inclusivity of higher education is to make special efforts to prepare prospective students beforehand, providing them with information about the available options and raising their aspirations.

### Bosnia

- Higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina is regulated by the Frame Act of Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina ("Official Gazette", No. 59/07, 59/09).
  - The Frame Act of Law on Higher Education provided for harmonization of the Laws on Higher Education in the Republic of Srpska, ten cantons in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and

the Brcko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina, after which Bosnian high school education is fully transferred to the Bologna system of education

- The Frame Act of Law on Higher Education does not contain provisions which regulate in detail the rights and obligations of students belonging to underrepresented groups. This law only prohibits discrimination on any grounds, including the prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of one of the vulnerable groups.
- Access to higher education will not be limited, directly or indirectly, on any actual or presumed ground such as sex, race, sexual orientation, physical or other impairment, marital status, color, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, association with a national community, property, birth, age or other status.
- Higher education institutions in accordance with the respective Acts on Higher Education and the statutes of higher education institutions can prescribe other requirements for access to higher education, which also implies the possibility of regulatory intervention in terms of improving access, participation in and completion of education at the universities in BH
- The general goals of education regulated by the Frame Act on the Law on Primary and Secondary Education arise from the generally accepted universal values of the society and proclaim, among other things, ensuring optimum development for every person, including those with special needs, in accordance with their age, abilities, and mental and physical characteristics.
  - This law shall provide equal opportunities for education and choice at all levels of education, regardless of gender, race, nationality, social and cultural origin and status, family status, religion, psycho-physical and other personal characteristics. Primary and secondary education in public institutions in BH is free. Free primary education is provided to all studentren.
- With regard to the financing of inclusion programs in BiH, some provisions of the regulative framework are aimed to accommodate the needs of underrepresented groups
  - Fund for Student Loans of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.  
Student loans are awarded according to the ranking list established based on scoring the following academic and social criteria. One criterion refers to the specific social student status: The status of a disabled person with a disability of at least 60%, civilian victims of war (except for disabled persons with a disability of at least 60%), a student of martyrs / killed solders, a student without both parents, a student without parental care or student without one parent (except for student of martyrs / killed solders), a student of both unemployed parents with whom lives in the same household, a student of both retired parents or a student from a households with three or more studentren in regular education or studies (mostly based on two criteria which are more favorable for a student).  
In case of the equal ranking, students with a specific social status have priority with regard to receiving a student's loan.
  - Students from underdeveloped cantons - for students from Posavina, Bosnia-Podrinje Canton and Canton 10 as well as Republika Srpska may receive subsidies to accommodation and meals of
  - Special funds may be allocated for incentive education of Roma, citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina who are studying in higher education institutions in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
  - Support for students with disabilities, citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina who are studying in higher education institutions in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Several Priorities for Development of Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the Period 2016 - 2026 (Draft), have been identified for BiH in particular
  - Good governance and management

- Resources
  - The link between the labor market and higher education
  - Qualification standards
  - Student experience
  - Internationalization
  - Statistics
- There is also an intention to synchronize the activities of all the government institutions, starting with the local community and moving on to national levels, to achieve maximum efficiency of investments, and concentrate resources in order to avoid overlapping investments from several sources
  - There is a need to engage the chamber of employment in a process of inclusion and that could help the population of people with special needs to make them desired applicant in competitions through donations; then engage entrepreneurs and present them with the competence of graduates and the advantages of employing staff who falls into this category.
  - There is a need to prepare a study on the comparative advantages of the population of people with special needs in certain fields, as well as propaganda activity in order to inform and sensitize the universities, and the general public, with the aim to achieve full inclusion in the processes of higher education of those groups of the population which so far did not significantly participate in the academic processes.
  - Six manuals were developed as part of the tempus project: „Equal opportunities for students with special needs in higher education“(EQOPP) (2011-2014) (project number: 516939- TEMPUS-1-2011-1-BA-TEMPUS-SMHES). The main goal of this project is to support B&H Universities in improving quality and modernisation of higher education by creating institutional capacity and by developing politics of practice, which will enable all students to study on B&H universities. All manuals are available on [www.equopp.ba](http://www.equopp.ba) in three versions on Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian language.

## Armenia

In Armenia, the social dimension in higher education is regarded as a policy priority, however, general perception in the society about inclusive education remains twofold.

### **Policy and legislative Level:**

- Inclusive education is poorly defined in policies and legal framework, and it is primarily perceived in terms of disability and special needs.
- Higher education is predominantly framed by the Law on Education (1999) and the Law on Higher and post-Graduate Professional Education (2004). Regarding the social dimension of higher education, the Law on Education (1999) determines (among others) that a certain number of students are provided with state-funded study places.
- HEIs are obligated to provide additional free study places of an extent of at least 10% of non-state funded study places
- The Law on Higher and post-Graduate Professional Education (2004) determines that the state provides student financial support such as full or partial refund of tuition fees, scholarships or loans. According to the Law, tuition fee refunds shall be provided to students who demonstrate high academic performance, are “socially insecure”, as well as to students from borderline or highland settlements
- Amendments to the Law on Higher and post-Graduate Professional Education in 2014 reveal that the regulations regarding the social dimension are still in progress. However, the legal and institutional reforms already done, included the introduction of general educational schools that provide inclusive education services (in addition to the two types of schools inherited from Soviet system - Special Schools, and General Education schools).
- Main Findings of the national review of the Social Dimension of Higher Education of the Bologna Process in Armenia 2015 (PL4SD)
  - Data: currently availability of data is limited for higher education. More detailed and comprehensive data (eg on the social background of students) could inform new policy making and strategy development.
  - Different ongoing initiatives and strategies: Different initiatives and strategies are ongoing, being implemented by different actors, but information is at times difficult to access.
  - Definitions of social inclusion for institutional strategies: The Law for HE from 2014 clearly classifies underrepresented groups as those with a disability, those who are orphans, studentren of war veterans or disabled parents, or studentren of families classified as financially vulnerable. Whilst such a broad classification is welcome and important for national policy, it is also important that HEIs have their own strategy related to the diversification of their student body.

### **What has to be done**

Short term:

- - Importance to gather data on the social background students in current initiatives
- - Need to develop benchmarks on the participation of underrepresented groups in HE

Mid term:

- - Importance to develop a student support system, less fragmented and based on needs, not on ability.
- - Need to develop an integrated strategy to decrease demand for private tutoring at secondary school level.
- - Need to recognise the sustainability and effectiveness of the HE funding system
- - Need to review policy-making and implementation processes and develop a national strategy.
- The ministry accepted the recommendations made by the review team and had indeed already realised some of them: a tertiary education information system has been launched and will be made publicly available, an assessment of the social needs of students had been conducted in 2014, Armenia intends to

continue participating in the EUROSTUDNET survey, and a revision of secondary school curricula (financed by the World Bank) will be implemented in the period from 2015-2019. Strong attention will be given to the social dimension within the “National Strategy for Education Development 2016-2025”.

**Higher Education system:**

- There is a lack of holistic approach in the education system, which is conditioned by the lack of formal and practical mechanisms for information flow and exchange of experience among professionals
- The increase of enrolment is prioritized over improvement of the quality of education. But together with the increase of enrollment it is equally critical to ensure quality services for the student/student with special educational need (SEN studentren).
- There is a strong need for capacity building and enhancement in all the spheres and levels of education system related to inclusive education
- It is important to ensure the funding schemes of inclusive education allow to effectively address the needs of the disabled and disadvantaged. For example it would be better if costs could be separated for each SEN student/student and thus calculated based on individual needs

**FOR DISCUSSION**

How can you use topics from this literature review to inform your own professional practice?

Do your own institutional and regional / national policies take account of good practice as identified in this literature review?

How can the literature review inform your staff training in the coming year? How can you share it with your staff / faculty?



## Development and Implementation of Social Dimension Strategies in Armenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina through Cross-Regional Peer-Learning

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## Guidelines for inclusive learning and teaching in high schools and universities