Inclusive Curriculum Module Survey: Guidance

7. Belonging and engagement

7.1 Learning outcomes and marking criteria are clear, measurable, and achievable for all.

When writing learning outcomes, try to avoid jargon and use plain English. Make sure they are measurable (e.g. 'student will be able to…' rather than 'student will gain an understanding of'). Always consider whether someone with a disability would be able to achieve your learning outcome/marking criteria in the way it is written, and if not, consider whether it could be measured in a different way, and amend if possible. (Examples of inadvertently ableist marking criteria may include: assigning marks for speaking clearly (what if the student has a speech impediment?), positive body language (what if they have cerebral palsy?) and good eye contact (what if they are visually impaired?) etc.).

7.2 Timetabling is carefully considered at programme level, with particular regard to: religious observance, inclusive assessment practices, work placements and field trips, teaching and exams.

When timetabling, consider:

- Key religious practices or festivals which may impact on your student's attendance, or ability to meet deadlines.
- Avoidance of assessment bunching at programme level (e.g. where multiple modules schedule assessments in the same week, causing serious stress to students).
- Providing sufficient time for open-book exams to allow equal opportunity for disabled students, carers, student parents etc.

7.3 Students are encouraged to build a sense of belonging and cohort cohesion, e.g. via icebreaker activities and mechanisms enabling them to provide support for each other.

Belonging is recognised as important to student success. A variety of activities recommended for student induction has been compiled by CIE. It's also important to encourage students to begin to work together as a community, e.g. by facilitating a module Q&A discussion board and encouraging them to provide support for each other by replying to questions posted there.

7.4 Class time is used to discuss study support available to students, including: academic study skills (KnowHow), and specialist English Language support (ELC).

Using a few minutes of class time (possibly at several points throughout the module) clarifies the importance of the support available, and normalises it. It's more effective in motivating students to engage with support than signposting in module handbooks or the VLE. KnowHow academic study skills courses are run by the library, while the English Language Centre (ELC) offer Insessional English classes and (for all students): Academic English classes.

7.5 An appreciation for diverse entry points around a particular subject is cultivated.

Each individual in your class approaches your subject from a unique perspective which relates to their identity and lived experience, e.g. race, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality, social capital, etc. Rather than regarding your class as a homogeneous group, invite their differences into your classroom and offer space to share perspectives and learn from each other. This can be as simple as asking students to share their thoughts on a topic in pairs/groups and feedback, or via shared documents or PollEverywhere if your class is large. Acknowledging and appreciating diverse entry points allows your students to personally engage with their curriculum.

7.6 Module progress towards closing any differentials in participation, progression and attainment is monitored and addressed in the curriculum, working with students as partners to ensure that all students are encouraged, empowered, valued and find relevance in their curriculum.

It's important that we continue to address any gaps in participation, progression and attainment, recognising that the responsibility for reducing the gap does not lie with the students but with us as educators and our curriculum. We have a responsibility to ensure our curriculum teaches all students everything they need to know to succeed in HE and doesn't pre-suppose unspecified experience/knowledge (e.g. study skills etc.) which some students have and others do not. This is sometimes called 'the hidden curriculum'. Engagement is also key – consider UCL's 'why is my curriculum white?' campaign and the experiences of other minority students, and recommendations made in the #ClosingTheGap UUK/NUS report.

10. Module content

10.1 Content includes diverse references, artefacts, datasets, examples, role models and/or guest speakers etc, providing different perspectives and enabling students to 'see themselves' in the curriculum.

This is about decolonising, but not just about race, and is relevant to every discipline. Look for meaningful opportunities to include diversity in your content in the ways suggested

above, so that a 'why is my curriculum white/straight/male/able/middle-class (etc.)?' charge could not be substantiated.

10.2 Content includes engaging students with the context of experts in the field so that they can critically evaluate their perspectives.

This is about decolonising, but not just about race, and it is absolutely relevant to every discipline. Historical power structures privileged who had access to education and who became experts in the field. Traditionally, these were likely to be white males of European heritage, of a particular social class, who were (mostly) perceived to be straight, and unlikely to be disabled. This excluded, marginalised and devalued most people and shaped our disciplines and what was valued in particular ways. It's an important discussion to have from a social justice perspective, but also in order to begin to effectively decolonise. Students should be supported to consider who was allowed to be an expert, who was not, and why this shaped/continues to shape our understanding of our subjects, including what knowledge was/is valued, by whom, and why, and who is missing from the canon. Ways to address this include: encouraging students to create their own research questions relating to the above, and giving space in your curriculum for the findings of their research.

Prompts may include: consider the lives of the experts in the field, how they came to be the dominant voice/s, if/how this has shaped progress in the discipline, who is missing or invisible in the history of your discipline and why? What steps might now be taken to rectify past injustices?

10.3 Students are able to negotiate some areas of choice in their curriculum

Allowing students to negotiate some areas of choice in their curriculum has a very positive impact on engagement, which in turn affects attainment & progression positively (e.g. Bovill & Bulley, 2011. #ClosingTheGap UUK/NUS report). This might include: allowing students to negotiate to follow up an aspect/area that particularly interests them e.g. for assessment, problem-based/case-based learning, research etc. or encouraging students to co-create your reading list or glossary. This builds on the concept of students as partners. See here for an introduction to students as co-creators of the curriculum.

10.4 Learning materials are digitally accessible and provided in advance of the teaching session, and a mixture of formats is used across the module (e.g. digital text, video, lecture capture etc.).

HE is in the process of adopting and adapting to digital accessibility legislation. This involves significant changes in the way we create documents, presentations, videos etc. so they are accessible to people with disabilities. If you're unfamiliar with this, guidance on digital accessibility is available in the CIE Hybrid Active Learning Canvas Course. A recent report sets out the most practical way forward, particularly with regard to the time required to create and edit subtitles, and reminds us that continuing to use a variety of formats while working towards full accessibility is the most important thing we can currently do to support learners.

Providing materials in advance allows students with a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) time to read the materials and prepare for your class

10.5 Content prepares students to understand and work with diverse individuals and groups.

Examples might include:

- Encourage students to investigate your subject through a series of 'lenses' – e.g. gender, LGBTQ+, disability etc. and have them consider how past or present experiences may shape past/present expectations or behaviour.
- Encourage students to consider the impact of intersectionality ('The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage' (Oxford English Dictionary)).
- Authentic activities working with/for/to a brief set by; clients/public bodies etc. with a diversity element.
- Group-work elements (guidance on inclusive group-work is in the Teaching and Learning Delivery section).

10.6 Reading/resource lists clearly identify which texts/resources are essential, and which are optional.

While this is helpful for all students, it particularly helps some students with Autistic Spectrum Conditions.

10.7 The use of non-English language sources in the curriculum is enabled.

Important note: this guidance does not apply to students studying foreign languages, who should continue to follow existing practices in their field.

Students with a cultural heritage which is not English language may wish to cite experts who publish in languages other than English. Where no published translation into English exists, the student should cite from the original text in the main body of the assignment and append an English translation (which is excluded from any wordcount), indicating in the reference if they have translated the work themselves. If the marker is not fluent in the language cited, they can access the appended translation.

Please advise your students if you are enabling them to do this, making clear that this is not yet universally accepted practice, and they will need to check the situation for each module. (This guidance is likely to be updated after consultation).

13. Teaching and learning delivery

13.1 Teaching anticipates students with disabilities, and strategies or adjustments are in place to support participation (e.g. accessible spaces, microphones/headsets, session outlines, accessible online tools, alternative arrangements where necessary).

While it's essential to be aware of and implement reasonable adjustments, and good practice to meet with any student requiring reasonable adjustments to discuss their particular support needs, the University also has an anticipatory duty to support students with disabilities. This means acting on the assumption that your class will include students with disabilities. In practice, this means things like: visiting your teaching space in advance to check it is accessible and requesting an alternative if it isn't, always using the microphone provided, sharing learning materials in advance, following best practice for accessibility in presentations re. font, colour etc., using a session outline so students are aware of any participatory elements coming up in your session (e.g. think, pair, share), and offering thinking time before asking for responses (I'll just give you a minute to think about that). Often, all students benefit from these measures, not just those with disabilities. Also, following principles of Universal Design for Learning, try to offer choice: multiple ways for students to access materials, participate, and express themselves.

13.2 The module is designed flexibly to take into account mature students, disabled students, parents, commuters, part-time students, and those who may be in a different time zone.

Your module fits within an existing or proposed programme, so there will be limits to how flexible you are able to be, but where you have options, aim to build in as much flexibility as you can from the list below:

Flexible course design can include elements of the following: part-time, day release and evening, accelerated or extended courses, distance learning (may include day schools/residential weekends), blended learning (combination of f2f with online learning, with course materials available 24/7), work-based learning (studying in the workplace, degree apprenticeships). See here for the UCAS guide on distance learning and part-time study.

13.3 Discipline-specific language is carefully introduced and supported, and the use of slang and cultural references, which can be difficult for international students to understand, is avoided or explained.

It can be particularly helpful to all students to outline any new terminology (e.g. academic or technical) at the start of a session, so that students have a better chance of recognising the words they are hearing. Another way to support this is via a co-created module glossary (e.g. in the VLE) where you and your students add new words or phrases as you encounter them.

A cultural reference is an example of something that only someone who understands a specific culture could understand. It might include pop-culture (e.g. referring to shared experience of watching a particular UK programme/channel) or an idiom (e.g. I'd be over

the moon with that'). Where it's important to use these references, please clarify the meaning, so all students understand.

13.4 Gender-neutral language is used where possible, and all students are invited to use their choice of pronoun (e.g. she/her/hers) and encouraged to restate this if they are incorrectly addressed.

Gender-neutral language means words such as chair/chairperson, police officer, spokesperson etc. – words which are not gender specific. In written documents, this could include replacing pronouns (e.g. he/she) with the person (e.g. 'the student'). The HR website contains advice on pronouns and LGBTQ+ Allyship and recommendations on actions which support LGBTQ+ students. Consider adding your pronouns to your email or Zoom signature, and if you are comfortable, include them when introducing yourself to help normalise their use (e.g. "Hello, I am Jane Smith and my pronouns are She/Her").

13.5 Students are given opportunities in their learning to widen their circles of contact or experience, and are supported to work together inclusively via the use of a

group-work contract or similar.

CIE has practical guidance on how to approach this in its Spotlight Guide to Cultural Integration of Home and Overseas Students, and Spotlight Guide to multicultural groupwork and an excellent resource for students: a group work contract. The group work contract supports inclusive group work via a structured opening conversation within the group, establishing preferred ways of working together and keeping in touch etc. We recommend using class time for this initial conversation, with staff on hand to offer support if required. In addition, when setting up groups, we'd recommend encouraging students to work with people they don't usually work with.

In addition, if your students do not already study in a real-world context, seek opportunities to bring involvement in real-world projects in your module, such as working with e.g. local government, charities, or industry on a real-world problem (e.g. genuine problem rather than something mocked up which has already been resolved) or the creation of a new resource. Your faculty careers team have great experience supporting this type of activity, which also meets many aspects of curriculum 2021.

13.6 Teaching methods offer diverse and anonymous ways to contribute views and participate in discussion, supporting minority voices (e.g. use of polling software).

Not all students are able or confident to speak in class, so offer multiple ways for students to participate. There are a variety of centrally supported collaborative tools you may wish to investigate (e.g. PollEverywhere, discussion boards, collaborative documents, online chat, etc.) - guidance is available in the CIE Hybrid Active Learning Canvas Course. Consider permitting anonymous participation, particularly if discussing sensitive or contentious issues or issues relating to personal identity.

16. Assessment and feedback

16.1 Assessment is inclusively designed to anticipate and remove barriers to student attainment (e.g. by : skill development, sensitive scheduling, & offering increased student choice).

Things to consider include:
- Student skill development, e.g. via safe practice opportunities.
- Whether you can improve the accessibility and reduce the need for reasonable adjustments when using any format (e.g. permitting digital pre-recorded presentations, or offering a choice of format).
- Key religious practices or festivals which may impact on your student's attendance, or ability to meet deadlines.
- Avoidance of assessment bunching at programme level (e.g. where multiple modules schedule assessments in the same week, causing serious stress to students).
- Providing sufficient time for open-book exams to allow equal opportunity for disabled students, carers, student parents etc.

16.2 Formative assessment opportunities are provided (low- or no-stakes) to prepare students for successful summative assessment.

Formative assessment is a Curriculum 2021 principle, and is excellent for equality, as it allows students to gain key skills and/or experience without the risk that their marks are significantly affected when trying something for the first time. Ideally, formative and summative assessments are linked in your module (and are preferably linked at programme level across modules), with an opportunity for students to engage with feedback on their formative assessment before creating or submitting a summative assessment. Practical advice is available in the CIE Spotlight Guide to Formative Assessment.

16.3 PSRB permitting, all students are offered a choice of format for each assessment (e.g. submit an essay or podcast) or a range of assessment types is offered across the module, so students can work to their strengths.

In practice, this means making sure your module activities are designed to develop students to be able to successfully tackle either option, and designing the marking criteria with care to ensure that the same learning outcomes and marking criteria can be demonstrated in both formats (ideally using a rubric). Academic colleagues who do this already designate their assessment as 'Coursework' in Curriculum Manager/Banner to avoid problems with weighted assessments appearing to add up to over 100%.

16.4 Co-creation of assessment: students are able to focus on their area of particular interest within your discipline.

Allowing students to negotiate some areas of choice in their curriculum has a very positive impact on engagement, which in turn affects attainment & progression positively (e.g. Bovill & Bulley, 2011. #ClosingTheGap UUK/NUS report). In assessment, this might include allowing students to negotiate to follow up an aspect/area that particularly interests them, for example allowing the student to suggest a particular case, problem, dataset, individual, event, or artefact to research and analyse. You will need to design the marking criteria with care to ensure that learning outcomes and marking criteria are applicable regardless of student choice of topic. This builds on the concept of students as partners. See here for An introduction to student and staff co-creation of the curriculum

16.5 Assessment literacy is supported via in-class activities (e.g. working with rubrics, sample assessments, discussion, peer review, whole-class feedback etc.)

Practical advice, together with a summary of the research underpinning this recommendation, can be found in CIE's Spotlight guide to teaching students to work with feedback & rubrics

16.6 Guidance on marking and feedback for students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs) is followed, with an emphasis on marking for content, ideas and critical thinking.

The Code of Practice on Assessment (CoPA) appendix K, annexe 1 provides practical guidelines and information to support individual markers to implement marking and provide appropriate feedback, as an anticipatory reasonable adjustment for students with dyslexia and/or other Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs), whilst maintaining academic standards.

16.7 Feedback/feedforward is linked directly to the marking criteria and rubric, and is timely, compassionate, constructive and specific.

A rubric enables students to understand what excellence looks like and how they currently measure up. If you are new to rubrics, practical advice on rubrics and marking criteria can be found in CIE's Spotlight guide to teaching students to work with feedback & rubrics and CIE Spotlight Guide What are rubrics?

- **Timely** – students need to receive feedback/feedforward in good time to implement recommendations for their next assessment.
- **Compassionate:** Don't assume poorly presented work represents a lack of effort, and when offering constructive criticism make sure the focus is on 'your work', rather than 'you'.
- **Constructive and specific:** e.g. 'here's where I think you have the greatest potential to improve'.