inclusive-HE

Inclusive Higher Education Framework and Indicators
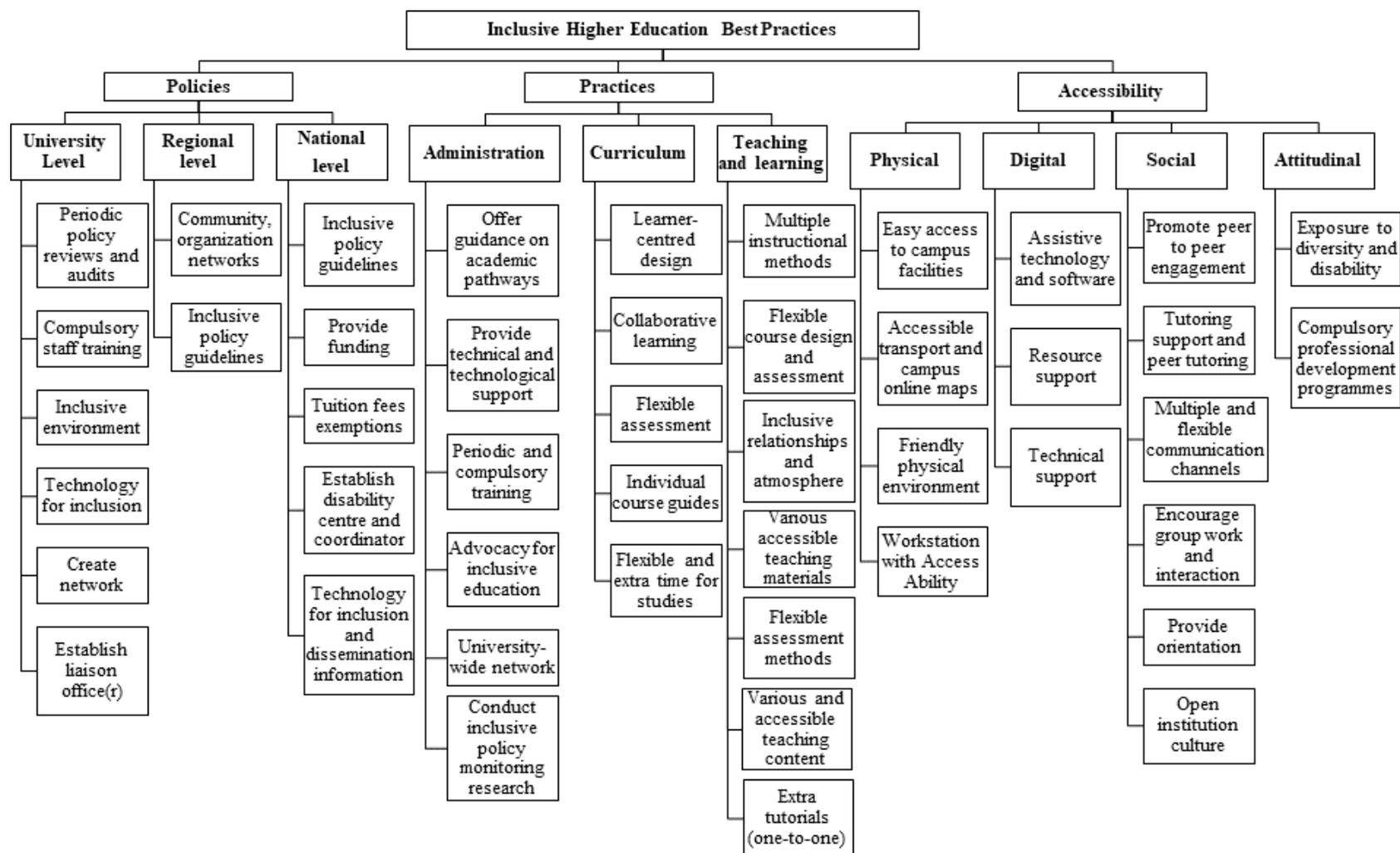
Table of Contents

Tool Description

We have developed this framework to guide higher education institutions (HEI) across Europe and the globe in the adaptation of their policies, programmes, accessibility and learning spaces to encourage and enable the full participation of minority social groups in higher education. This framework provides a one-stop for everything you need to know about implementing inclusive education. To assist you with this, we present the most innovative and inclusive best practices based on a systematic literature review of peer-reviewed scientific studies from across the globe between the years 2000 to 2021.

The best practices, which is based on rigorous scientific methods have the potential to redress some of the barriers marginalized social groups face regarding access, participation and completion of higher education studies. The framework is divided into three main components of the Inclusive Higher Education framework: policies, practices, and accessibility. Each component consists of several categories with accompanying indicators of best practices. Policies consist of National level, Regional level, and University level. Practices consist of Administration, Curriculum, and Teaching and Learning. Accessibility consists of Physical, Digital, Social, and Attitudinal.

How to use it

- Review the categories under each of the three main components of the inclusive higher education framework.

- Under each **category** you can find the specific inclusive best practice indicators.

- For each **indicator** you can find more information about specific measurable actions that could be implemented to realise inclusion in higher education for this indicator.

inclusive-HE

The Framework

Inclusive Higher Education Best Practices

Policies

University Level
- Periodic policy reviews and audits
- Compulsory staff training
- Inclusive environment
- Technology for inclusion
- Create network
- Establish liaison office(r)

Regional level
- Community, organization networks
- Inclusive policy guidelines

National level
- Inclusive policy guidelines
- Provide funding
- Tuition fees exemptions
- Establish disability centre and coordinator
- Technology for inclusion and dissemination information

Practices

Administration
- Offer guidance on academic pathways
- Provide technical and technological support
- Periodic and compulsory training
- Advocacy for inclusive education
- University-wide network
- Conduct inclusive policy monitoring research

Curriculum
- Learner-centred design
- Collaborative learning
- Flexible assessment
- Individual course guides
- Flexible and extra time for studies

Teaching and learning
- Multiple instructional methods
- Flexible course design and assessment
- Inclusive relationships and atmosphere
- Various accessible teaching materials
- Flexible assessment methods
- Various and accessible teaching content
- Extra tutorials (one-to-one)

Accessibility

Physical
- Easy access to campus facilities
- Accessible transport and campus online maps
- Friendly physical environment
- Workstation with Access Ability

Digital
- Assistive technology and software
- Resource support
- Technical support

Social
- Promote peer to peer engagement
- Tutoring support and peer tutoring
- Multiple and flexible communication channels
- Encourage group work and interaction
- Provide orientation
- Open institution culture

Attitudinal
- Exposure to diversity and disability
- Compulsory professional development programmes

4

Indicators

Inclusive Policy Indicators for Higher Education

University level

Policy indicator	Specific policies to implement for each indicator
Periodic policy reviews/audits	• Set periodic policy reviews. • Have audits and use checklists to evaluate university facilities and services. • Continuously develop strategies to facilitate change, improve understanding, and widen exposure of HE staff to people with disabilities • Monitoring organizational and structural accessibility.
Compulsory staff training	• Compulsory training for administrative and teaching staff on inclusive practices, supporting students, building inclusive environments, and using technologies. • Implementation of diversity and sensitivity training which includes: identity self-reflection of behaviours and differences, recognition and and demystifing of any presumed stereotypes. • Training sessions to learn about new methods of effectively upholding the principles of equal access to information. • Training workshops on the legal and technical requirements of the accessibility mandate. • A series of external and in-house sessions that address digital content policies and procedures to raise awareness among librarians how to ensure accessibility. • Professional development events related to accessibility, to provide practical information that enhance peer learning and the implementation of services to accommodate all user groups. • Provide universal course design training.
Inclusive environment	• Encourage collaboration, administrative support, and participation throughout campus departments. • Establish collaborations between library staff, people with disabilities and the office of student disability services. • Offer information on services, policies, and procedures for individuals with disabilities. • Promote customizable library services during orientation workshop for new and returning students and faculty. • Provide students with different types of desks and use flexible sitting arrangements. • Provide earlier accessible assessment for dyslexia. • Promote research and evidence to support the development of campus-based programs. • Aim for additional funding resources for note takers and other services.

Technology for inclusion	• Provide assistive technology training. • Invest in website development for training, guidance, and community engagement. • Establish an ongoing campaign to remove/fix inaccessible PDFs and videos without closed captions for every website associated with the university. • Allow students to use computers and record lectures.
Create network	• Creation of network between embedded accessibility coordinators within faculties and institutions. • Commit to collaborating with schools, families, and external agencies on how to support students on campus.
Liaison office(r)	• Having a Liaison that can keep the staff well-informed on how to maintain ongoing compliance with accessibility standards through regular communication, resources, and support services, which follow the outcome of relevant professional development workshops. • Establish the role of disability officer and dyslexia coordinator. • Ensure regular institutional meetings and professional development sessions to keep the Librarian well informed on daily activities, important events and/or curricular changes in disability services. • Provide Student Support Services to transmit information across academic departments and promote dyslexia-friendly approaches. • Create individual course guides for students, faculty, staff, researchers and other affiliates of university's academic departments, to use as a point of reference.
Targeted enrolment initiative	• Widening information channels of university application accessible to parents and students of minorities • Flexible language admission requirements for foreign students. • Promote exchange of ideas that highlight positive collaborations and practices of assisting people with disabilities. • Rigorous monitoring of the systems used to serve disabled students

Regional level

Policy indicator	Specific policies to implement for each indicator
Community & organizational networks	• Team up with community organizations in the neighbourhood that serve marginalized students to develop events and programming.Compulsory training for administrative and teaching staff on inclusive practices, supporting students, building inclusive environments, and using technologies. • Promote community, organization networks and enforce inclusive guidelines.

National level

Policy indicator	Specific policies to implement for each indicator
Periodic policy reviews/audits	- Set periodic policy reviews. - Have audits and use checklists to evaluate university facilities and services. - Continuously develop strategies to facilitate change, improve understanding, and widen exposure of HE staff to people with disabilities - Monitoring organizational and structural accessibility.
Compulsory staff training	- Compulsory training for administrative and teaching staff on inclusive practices, supporting students, building inclusive environments, and using technologies. - Implementation of diversity and sensitivity training which includes: identity self-reflection of behaviours and differences, recognition and and demystifing of any presumed stereotypes. - Training sessions to learn about new methods of effectively upholding the principles of equal access to information. - Training workshops on the legal and technical requirements of the accessibility mandate. - A series of external and in-house sessions that address digital content policies and procedures to raise awareness among librarians how to ensure accessibility. - Professional development events related to accessibility, to provide practical information that enhance peer learning and the implementation of services to accommodate all user groups. - Provide universal course design training.

inclusive-HE

Inclusive Practice Indicators in Higher Education

Administration

Practice indicator	Specific practices to implement for each indicator
Guidance on academic pathways	• The admissions' staff having meetings with refugee and asylum seeker students face to face or telephone for checking the entry requirements. • Recommending pathways to refugee and asylum seeker students to meet the university requirements.
Provide technical & technological support & compulsory training	• Arrange one to one support with a technician to prepare disabled student's equipment before the degree starts. • Compulsory training for administration staff to support students with impairments. • Participate in campus-wide efforts/events sponsored for or by the Office of Student Disability Services. • Proactively advocate for the freedom to equally access resources, technology, and services to support individuals with disabilities.
University-wide network & inclusive policy monitoring research	• Use social media as an instructional tool to promote services the college community may not be aware of i.e. assistive technology apps. • Compulsory training for administration staff to support students with impairments. • Solicit feedback from key stakeholders and administrators through surveys, focus groups, and incentivized input to monitor programming and services. • Drive awareness-raising among staff and students by using research data and other material.

Curriculum

Practice indicator	Specific practices to implement for each indicator
Learner-centred design	• Learner-centered approach with a focus on the student and learning instead of teaching.
Collaborative learning	• Group activities.
Flexible assessment	• Flexible ways of assessment.
Individual course guides	• Create individual course guides for students, faculty, staff, and other affiliates of university's academic departments, programs, and researchers to use as a point of reference. • Extra time for students during examinations and practicum.

inclusive-HE

Teaching and Learning

Practice indicator	Specific practices to implement for each indicator
Multiple instructional methods	• Use of technology during instruction. • Use differentiated instructional strategies by doing a student's pre-assessment. • Application of instructional design methodology of analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation (Branch, 2009) and the universal design for learning guidelines. • Use a variety of teaching methods and strategies. • Use arts-based methodologies. • Describe the visual concepts. • Initiate activities that promote group work and class discussion.
Flexible course design	• Flexibility in course design and delivery.
Inclusive relationships and atmosphere	• Build an atmosphere where students feel comfortable to express their needs. • Use small seminar groups and number of students. • Support student engagement so they can feel comfortable asking questions. • Build inclusive relationships with the students • Provide opportunities for collaboration with peers. • Inform students about and the use of the Disability Assist provision. • Allow students to record and use their handheld devices during the lecture • Provide a seat to the student in the seating position with minimum noises and in a U-shape sitting arrangement considered effective to reach all of the students. • Initiate group work activities to uplift the involvement and engagement of the student in the class. • Apply flexible grouping strategies to expose the students to various learning experiences with various characteristics of peers.
Various/accessible teaching materials	• Inform students about and the use of the Disability Assist provision. • Provide screen reader such as JAWS or NVD. • Add alternative text attached to the picture so the student can have a clear description on the picture. • Provide Slate, Stylus, Picture Descriptor Software such as cloud vision. • Provide note taking software such as Evernote, write pad. • Provide recorded and laptop. • Provide Braille Translation software, and Braille printer.
	• Provide reader that assist the students to do the exam. • Design examination that is accessible for students such as providing the examination in form of audio, braille, or word file Assistive technology. • Flexibility with students' absences.

Various/accessible teaching content	- Use online platforms to upload course material and provide lecturer's notes. - Materials and lecture notes posted on Minerva - Provide the reading materials in accessible format such as word, pdf or epub. - Provide the materials before the class so students can have enough time to learn it. - Provide lecture hand-outs and Power Point presentation. - Availability of content and learning resources in alternative formats.
Extra tutorials (one-to-one)	- Provide set times for tutorials and office hours, where the students can see their teachers and tutors whenever problems arise. - Extra tutorials (one-to-one sessions) for students with disabilities provided by postgraduate students. - Provide mentoring support. - Offer access to trained dyslexia specialists, to assistive technology and counselling. - Students are paired with the Librarian to identify specific challenges and steps to remedy the obstacles to obtain information.

Inclusive Practices concerning Accessibility in Higher Education

Physical Accessibility

Accessibility indicator	Specific practices to implement for each indicator
Easy access to campus facilities	• Indoor and outdoor pathways of each building and libraries should be clear, safe, and barrier-free. • Elevators, water fountains, and public areas (i.e. circulation desk, reference or information desk, stacks, etc.) accessible to individuals with disabilities. • Review immediate access to the physical space within the library, as well as transporting to and from each facility on campus to visit the library. • The library entrance/exit to be clear and wide enough for wheelchair users. • Signage and wayfinding to help users navigate through library facilities • Student halls specially adapted for people with disabilities. • Provision of a university bus that is accessible for students with mobility disabilities. • Creation of a detailed online map that demonstrates accessible areas, including easy access entrances, push-button or keypad automatic doors, and barrier-free routes to different access points of each library facility.
Friendly physical environment	• More space for self-study on campus, computer centres, more private study areas whether in the library or individual departments. • Restructuring of the physical environment and the creation of accessible facilities. • Gender inclusive-bathrooms. • Facilities fully equipped to accommodate every user. • At least one larger wheelchair accessible compartment for easier access in restrooms. • Proper signage, stalls with dual grab bars, and accessible fixtures in restrooms.

Digital Accessibility

Accessibility indicator	Specific practices to implement for each indicator
Assistive technology and software	• Available screen readers and Dictaphones. • Appropriate screen sizes. • Appropriate audio-visual support. • Provide assistive technology and supportive software. • Use PowerPoint. • Provide the AccessText Network that helps university students with print disabilities • Connect the Office of Student Disability with major publishers to obtain text books in alternative formats, free of charge. • Open-source tools that can be applied to evaluate webpages in conjunction with individual assessment to oversee accuracy. For example: the Web Accessibility Tool http://wave.webaim.org WAVE which is a browser-based tool developed by Web Accessibility in Mind (WebAIM) to ensure website content compliance. • Use of Colour Contrast Analyser Tool (see https://www.visionaustralia.org) to help foreground and background color combinations to determine whether it provides sufficient color visibility. • Use of Browse Aloud support-software, which adds speech, reading, and translation to websites by facilitating access and participation for people with dyslexia, low literacy, English as a second language, and those with mild visual impairments.
Resource support	• Use of online resources for course work. • Online databases with screen reader accessibility using JAWS. • Access to Bookshare, one of the largest online platforms for individuals with various print disabilities with eBooks. • Access Learning Ally, one of the largest resources that produces and maintains educational audiobooks. • The libraries can provide materials in alternate formats to remediate inaccessible print and electronic/digital materials. • Content authors or editors have to confirm that screen-readers and other assistive technology software can properly interpret multimedia, HTML, and PDF documents. • Arrange one to one support with a technician to prepare the student's equipment before the degree starts.

Social and Attitudinal Accessibility

Accessibility indicator	Specific practices to implement for each indicator
Promote peer to peer engagement	• Initiate activities to uplift the involvement and engagement of the students. • Tutoring support by peer students. • Reduce barriers of communication through access, signage, telephone, in-person interaction, service announcements, and various forms of articulating information to accommodate patrons with disabilities. • Provide group work and activities that promote interaction between students. • Establishment of introductory tour offered by volunteer students.
Exposure to diversity and disability	• Increase contact between students with special needs and disabilities and students without special needs and disabilities. • Pre-service intervention programme on movement experiences for students to change attitudes towards accessibility and inclusion.