INCLUSIVE HE

Design, implement, and monitor effective inclusive policies and practices in HEIs

inclusive-HE

Module Objectives

➢ Familiarise academic staff, practitioners, learning designers, and support staff with the development of inclusive education programmes in Higher Education (HE) within the Design Thinking Methodology (DTM) framework.

➢ Create inclusive practices that allow students with diverse abilities, ethnic, cultural and migration background, sexual orientation and religion to have an equal opportunity to learn.

Fostering inclusion in HE by offering hands-on activities to empower academics to integrate inclusive practices in their curricula

Module Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this module participants should be able to:

- design and develop inclusive programmes suitable for HE

- evaluate the usefulness of the existing inclusive programmes in higher education courses and provide recommendations for improvement

- modernise curricula and integrate inclusive practices for the design and delivery of courses.

Addressing Key challenges in HEIs

Key challenges

- Inclusiveness has become a strategic imperative for HEIs, impacting learning and teaching, research and culture

- Equitable access and participation for all is a key concern in HEIs

- Universities cannot be exclusive at a time when society is evolving fast

- The inequalities that arise are related to the individuals' diverse backgrounds (financial, social, and cultural differences) and the respective opportunities given to them

- Universities should adopt policies to remove the barriers that disrupt students' academic success

Diversity

- Diversity, equity, and inclusion, social justice are all different terms. Can you distinguish them?

Diversity

The individual and group/social differences that make us unique. For example, the personality, life experiences, race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, physical or cognitive abilities, cultural, political, religious, or other affiliations.

Conceptualising Diversity

Diversity

Why is it important?

- it enriches the educational experience: we learn about different experiences, beliefs, and perspectives

- it promotes personal growth and a healthy society as it challenges stereotypical opinions, encouraging critical thinking

- it strengthens communities and the workplace as it helps students learn to communicate effectively with people of various backgrounds

- it fosters mutual respect and teamwork

Conceptualising Equity

Equity

The opportunities we give people to succeed by addressing barriers and ensuring fair access, participation and success, especially for underrepresented populations

Why is it important?

- it protects human rights: all people receive the support they need to develop their capacities and participate fully in society

- it allows economic mobility: students are prepared to achieve their working potential and improve their economic status

- it ensures that all students achieve the same positive outcomes regardless of where they started or what challenges they might experience

Conceptualising Equity

Equity VS Equality

Equality differs from equity. Equality is about **sameness** (same opportunities, resources, quality of instruction) whereas equity is about **fairness** (different resources, approaches, methods according to the different needs).
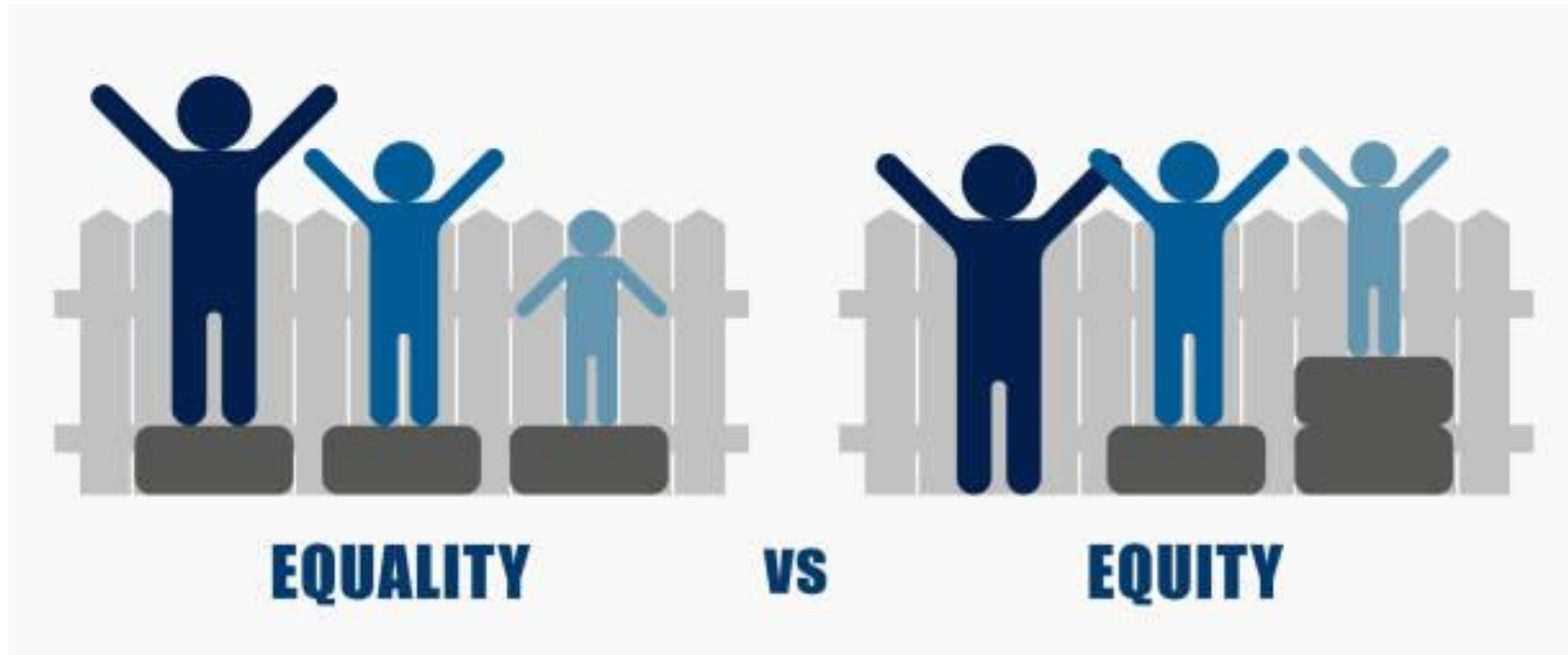
Conceptualising Inclusion

Inclusion

The intentional and ongoing actions we take to foster diversity and give voice to diverse people, in the communities (social, cultural, geographical), the curricular, and extracurricular activities.

Why is it important?

- it tackles social and democratic challenges

- it supports the development of all students' basic skills (literacy, numeracy and digital competence)

- it increases the chances for disadvantaged students to enter and complete higher education

Conceptualising Inclusion

Inclusion in terms of gender, sex, disability, ethnicity, race, religion

Gender: social, psychological and cultural characteristics that form a person's identity (e.g., female, male, both, neither) including norms, roles, relationships.

Sex: biological characteristics with which we are born (e.g., female, male, intersex).

Religion or belief: religion has the meaning usually given to it but belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. atheism)

Disability: a person having a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities

Race: refers to the protected characteristic of race. It refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, and nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins

Ethnicity: the social group a person belongs to, and either identifies with or is identified with by others, as a result of a mix of cultural and other factors including language, religion, ancestry and physical features traditionally associated with race

Conceptualising Social justice

Social justice

Social justice is fairness and equity in terms of access to wealth, opportunities, and social privileges for all individuals.

Why is it important?

- transforming the classroom into a collaborative community
- creating a safe space for applying academic knowledge to real-world problems
- increasing students' ability to tell the difference between facts and opinions

Conceptualising Social justice

The Five Principles of Social Justice Education

- Inclusion and equity

- Holding high expectations of all students

- Reciprocal community relationship

- A system-wide approach to social justice

- Social justice education and intervention in the form of liberation

Inclusion readiness assessment and reflection tool

This inclusion readiness assessment and reflection tool is built with the purpose to be used as a checklist for institutions in higher education. **https://inclusivehe.eu/en/toolkit/checklist**

- The aim is to encourage higher education institutions reflection on their policies and practices regarding diversity and inclusion and support them in fostering inclusion.

- The checklist is divided into three core dimensions of the Inclusive Higher Education framework: policies, practices, and accessibility.

- Each dimension consists of areas and standards which guide discussions and analysis of the inclusive profile of a higher education institution:

A. Policies: National level, Regional level, University level

B. Practices: Administration, Curriculum, Teaching and Learning

C. Accessibility: Physical, Digital, Social, Attitudinal

Inclusive Higher Education SWOT analysis

A tool for strategic planning and exploration of your HEI's internal and external environment with regard to inclusion. The analysis includes identifying current strengths and weaknesses, as well as future opportunities, and threats.

- **S**trengths**:** What do you/your institution do well with regards to inclusive policies and/or practices? *Example:* we have audits and use checklists to evaluate university facilities and services.

- **W**eaknesses**:** What could/should be improved? Is there a lack of resources, knowledge, skills, etc?. *Example:* lack of diverse instructional materials and practices

- **O**pportunities: What are your/your institution's goals about inclusive policies and/or practices? *Example:* to provide opportunities for student success

- **T**hreats: What kinds of obstacles are there for meeting the goals? *Example:* the attitudes and beliefs of people- especially those with power or privilege

https://inclusivehe.eu/en/toolkit/swot-analysis

Challenges for Inclusion in HEIs

Campus

In terms of campus-wide practices, students may face lack of:

- physical access (e.g., architectural design, mobility accommodations)

- institutional guided special services

- an office that addresses students' needs

- tailored counselling services

- student orientation services

- consistent application of rules and policies (e.g., exam formats, class attendance)

Challenges for Inclusion in HEIs

Teaching

In terms of teaching and learning, students may face lack of:

- support with necessary resources and adaptations of the material

- adequate literature for students with special needs (e.g., braille alphabet)

- library services for students with vision impairment

- instruments that aid teaching and learning

- sign language translator

- accessing education and digital environments

Challenges for Inclusion in HEIs

Digital environments

Special needs

Digital learning materials might be inaccessible to individuals with a disability that is diagnosed or not (e.g. discoloration problems)

Socioeconomic Status (SES)

Tuition fees, cost for learning materials, cost for studying in a different city make education inaccessible for individuals with low socioeconomic status.

Cultural diversity

Students of nomad families, first generation migrant families, roma students, muslim girls might face stereotypes related to innovation or not have equal opportunities to develop their digital competences to actively participate in learning.

Gender balance

Inequities in terms of gender can also hinder digital access. For example, ICT and innovation might be male-oriented and this can result in limited involvement/absence of women in STEM.

Challenges for Inclusion in HEIs

Attitudes

- lack of emotional and social support

- discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sexual orientation or other characteristics

- harmful social attitudes and social isolation

- limited social networks and social relations at university (e.g., due to difficulty in understanding social boundaries)

- individuals' hesitation and doubt about their abilities to succeed

- individuals' reluctance to help them achieve their full potential

Conflict in HEIs

Conflicts on campus exist and they vary in number, kind, and complexity.

Conflict is generally defined as a **relational dispute** between t**wo or more** parties arising out of a **difference** in thought process, attitudes, understanding, interests, requirements and even sometimes perceptions, which seems to be inevitable in organisational life, but it does need not to have destructive consequences for the organisation (or work group).

Challenges for Inclusion in HEIs

Principles and Problem-thinking processes of Conflict resolution

Seven steps for an effective problem-solving process in relation to conflict resolution:

1. Identify the issues.

Be clear about what the problem is. Remember that different people might have different views of what the issues are.

2. Understand the interests of all the people involved.
– Try to actively listen to the other party. Put down your differences for a while and listen to each other with the intention to understand.

3. List the possible solutions (options) - This is the time to do some brainstorming, with lots of room for creativity.

4. Evaluate the options. - This is an honest evaluation of the options that you may think of as a result of undergoing the previous stages.

5. Select an option or options. - What's the best option, in the balance?

Is there a way to "group" a number of options together for a more satisfactory solution?

6. Document the agreement(s)

Instead of relying on your memory, write down the details and implications of the agreements.

7. Agree on monitoring the option selected.

Conditions may change. Agree to monitor sustainability of the decision

Inclusive HEIs

Inclusive Environment

What is inclusive teaching? How can we achieve this?

"I treat all students the same, therefore, I have an inclusive classroom".

"My classroom is inclusive because my students are demographically diverse including abilities, race, gender, age, etc."

"I teach in the STEM fields so discussions of inclusion aren't relevant to my courses."

Need for:

➢ Planning and promoting across a spectrum of practices

➢ Understanding the techniques to structure inclusive education and use pedagogical moves to foster inclusion

Inclusive HEIs

Content

In what ways is your curriculum accessible and relevant to your students?

- Include a wide range of experiences, and backgrounds in your course material (e.g., readings, case studies from authors of different backgrounds)

- Voice a wide range of perspectives yourself

- Be transparent on content choices and design

- Add an inclusion statement and information about supportive resources to your syllabus

Inclusive HEIs

Teaching methods

Are you promoting student engagement in ways that are meaningful and relevant to students? Do you support all students in producing high-level work?

- Examine your own biases so that they won't unconsciously influence your approach or reaction to students

- Develop individual plans for students with special needs

- Reduce class size

- Use participatory methodologies and new technology resources (digital texts, images, and audio, recording software, virtual reality for multisensory experiences)

- Use multiple ways of representing content (e.g., modelling, images, objectives and manipulatives, graphic organisers, oral and written responses)

Inclusive HEIs

Teaching methods

- Encourage group work and pair up students in ways that they can benefit from each others' strengths (e.g., an immigrant student with advanced subject-specific skills but poor language skills to benefit from and assist a local student with the opposite skills)

- Develop authentic assessment activities such as students documenting life history interviews, personal stories, autobiographical journaling

- Allow students to reflect on and express their experiences from their own culture

- Ensure that your learning material includes global concerns on the topics and positive representations of international and domestic cultures

- Build on students' real-life experiences, constantly scaffold new, more complex learning

Inclusive HEIs

Teaching methods

- Use students' native language where possible or translators

- Minimise use of jargon or colloquial phrases and talk slowly

- Establish effective classroom rules/routines (e.g., code of conduct)

- Provide extra time, considering any linguistic difficulties or other needs

- Give alternative options (e.g., preferred content, projects done in multiple languages)

- Provide students with opportunities to use critical reasoning, take academic risks, and build a growth mindset to learn from mistakes

- Give students specific oral and written feedback that helps them improve their performance

Inclusive HEIs

Teaching methods

- Build environments that reduce stress, promote safety, and enhance cooperation rather than competition

- Develop inclusive language guide for reference throughout the course (e.g., neutral gender language).

- Use gender-based research in the field and workshops presenting success stories or case studies

- Use group work in ways that students can benefit from each other (e.g., blending cultures).

Inclusive HEIs

Accessibility through digital technology

Resources

[Bookshare](#) is one of the largest online platforms that offers eBooks for individuals with various print disabilities.

[Learning Ally](#) is one of the largest resources that produces and maintains educational audiobooks.

Library materials in alternate formats and online databases with screen reader accessibility

Assistive technologies:

Reading ([NaturalReade](#)r, [Quizlet](#))
Writing ([TalkTyper](#), EasyBib, Grammarly, [Scrible](#))
Vision ([Otter Voice Notes](#),[Windows magnifier](#))
Hearing ([PowerPoint](#), [GoogleSlides](#))
Computer Access ([Lightkey, Dictation, [Speechnotes](#))

Inclusive HEIs

Accessibility through digital technology

Teaching and learning design

The W3C Web Accessibility Initiative provides tips on how to make your presentations accessible. For example, it is important that you use headings properly to organise a page/document and add alt-text for images to help people using screen readers understand the structure of the page.

The Colour Contrast Analyser Tool can help you optimise the digital content for individuals with vision disabilities like colour-blindness and low-vision impairments. You can use it to determine the contrast ratio of two colours. Dark text on a light background is easiest to read; avoid designs with text reversed (e.g., white text on a black background) or without sufficient contrast (e.g., red text on a blue background).

The Web Accessibility Tool can help you evaluate web pages to make them more accessible for people with disabilities. You insert a web page and the tool identifies accessibility errors you can improve.

Accessibility through digital technology

Accessing knowledge

Students can crowd source their notes and collectively create study guides (e.g., using Google Docs), build online communities in social media platforms

Improving knowledge

Students can better understand complex concepts or experience controversial issues in a low-stake environment. For example, through a VR tool, students can experience women's life in cultures where access to education is denied.

Inclusive HEIs

Accessibility through digital technology

Evaluating knowledge

All students should have equal opportunities in improving their competences. Technology can allow you to evaluate learning outcomes in multiple ways and provide meaningful feedback, differentiating assessment based on learners' needs. You can also use learning analytics to analyse students' needs and find solutions.

Knowledge storage

Through technology, you can store historical and cultural knowledge, preserving and sharing the voices of all people. Through online repositories and knowledge sharing platforms, you can share students' success stories and maintain a culture of diversity within your institution.

Climate in the classroom

Are you creating an atmosphere for learning that is accessible and meaningful for all? Students learn better when they feel socially connected to one another and the class.

- Take an asset-based approach: value what your students bring in the classroom by focusing on their strengths

- Create opportunities for students to build rapport with each other and with you at the beginning of and throughout the semester

- Get to know your students as individuals rather than as representatives for entire groups

- Learn and use students' names and pronouns

- Gather and respond to anonymous student feedback (on teaching techniques, comfort level, classroom experiences, etc.) throughout the semester

Assessment

How can we diversify the ways that students demonstrate their mastery of competences?

- Show to students the assessment criteria and how they relate to learning goals, along with examples of how to succeed

- Think beyond tests; give students multiple ways and repeated opportunities to reflect upon and demonstrate their learning and growth

- Create opportunities for students to show their skills and successes, promoting solidarity rather than competition around assessment

- Create low-stakes opportunities for students to practice before they are asked to perform

Power relationships

Does the learning environment empower all students? Does it disrupt the traditional power dynamics between teacher and student and among students?

- Listen to your students' voices in terms of the syllabus and pedagogical choices, whenever feasible

- Allow students leadership roles during class sessions

- Allow students to have responsibility for their learning, contributing to their own and the learning community's success (e.g., lead discussions)

- Consider how your identity relates to the power dynamics

- Avoid generalisations that may exclude students (e.g., "when you go home for break," "if you have a child someday," "it only costs xxx")

Campus

- disabled-friendly facilities (e.g., the building enables student mobility within institutional premises)

- counselling/support systems (buddy system)

- flexible admission procedures for students with special needs, minorities/underrepresented groups

- funding allocations

- collaborations between policy and higher education stakeholders

- establish staff hiring processes that promote diversity (e.g., guidelines and protocols for candidate evaluation)

- develop non-discrimination policies in terms of admissions, employment, educational programs, athletics, student health insurance, gender-inclusive facilities (e.g., locker rooms, restrooms, residence hall rooms)
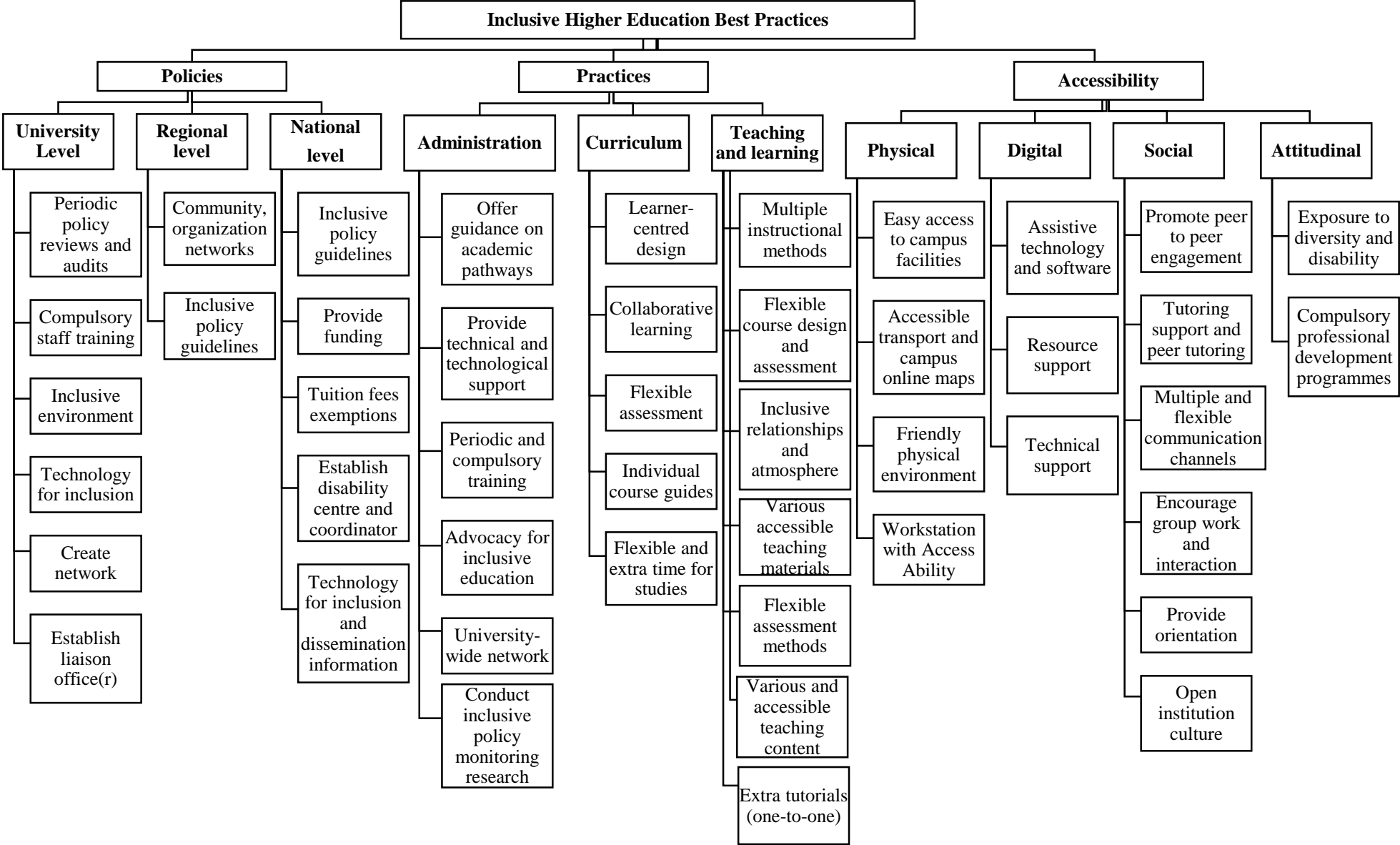
Attitudes

- professional training for teachers, to improve faculty's personal beliefs on students' with different background, abilities, etc.

- extracurricular activities with students, collective involvement in projects, events, seminars, workshops and awareness-raising campaigns to remove prejudices

- support students in creating and running student-led initiatives (e.g., cultural clubs to learn more about their culture as well as other students' cultures)

- events to increase awareness on inclusion, diversity, equity (e.g., thematic weeks). Encourage the participation of underrepresented groups as exceptional speakers to the events.

- continuously learn about implicit bias challenging them beyond the university walls

Inclusive Higher Education Best Practices 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

Inclusive HEIs

Benefits for HEIs and students

- More positive attitude in the peer group

- Extra resources used to the benefit of all

- More varied classroom organisation and teaching methods

- Improve their quality of life and to expand their occupational prospects Increase their opportunities to get and keep a job

- Obtain higher revenues

- Achieve an independent life
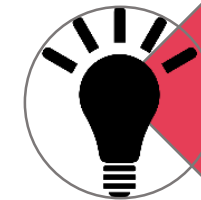
Design and development of inclusive courses

STAGES

- **Stage 1** Empathise and Understand learners' needs and how they see the world.

- **Stage 2** Define – Learners' needs and course objectives.

- **Stage 3** Ideate – explore and identify possible solutions, develop outlines

- **Stage 4** Prototype – develop authentic and meaningful learning activities and experiences.

- **Stage 5** Test – use rubrics to evaluate content and check for multiple means of presentation, engagement and understanding.
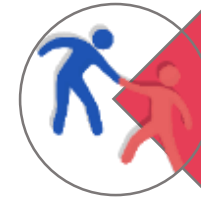
Empathize and Understand
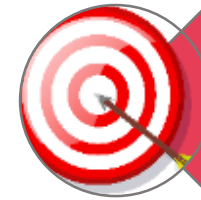
Define

Ideate
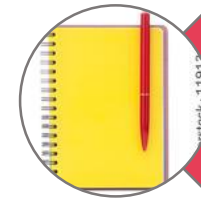
Prototype

Test

Design and development of inclusive courses

STAGE 1: Emphathize: Understand learners' needs

- Engage with learners and understand their needs

- Acknowledge the diversity in terms of abilities, learning preferences, motivations, access to technology, commitments.

  - Challenge:

    - Difficult to emphasize and understand learners' needs in the early stages of course design

Empathize and Understand
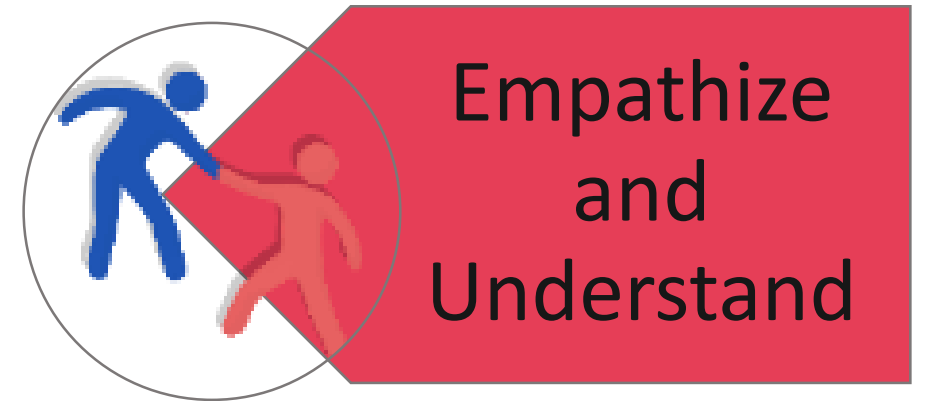
Design and development of inclusive courses

STAGE 1: Emphathise: Understand learners' needs

Conduct of small scale research

- Surveys
- Interviews
    - Gather information on learners' preparedness
    - Goals, motivations, interests
    - Background knowledge
    - Misconceptions on the subject areas
- Learners' profiles
    - Personal information and background
- Feedback

Design and development of inclusive courses

STAGE 2: Define – Address learners' needs in course objectives

➢ Identify course goals and objectives in relation to learners' needs

➢ Identify course design team members such as instructional designer, literacy expert, multimedia designer, technician

➢ Address learners' needs

- Identify possible solutions to barriers faced by students
- Include captioning or text representation in videos, online lecturers and multimedia resources
- Consider lighting and visibility, seating arrangements
- Instructional materials must be accessible to work with assistive technology
- Minimise distraction in the environment
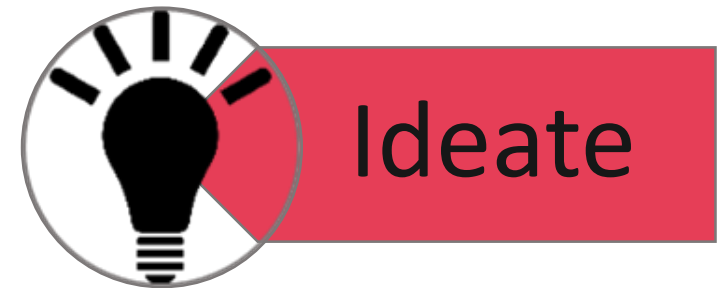- Allow for extended time on timed exams and essays

Define

Design and development of inclusive courses

STAGE 3: IDEATE: Explore and identify possible solutions in terms of offering inclusive learning activities and experiences

Offer multiple means of representation

- Integrate Visual and audio content including podcasts/video/video conferencing options for lectures.

- Accept format choice (oral, written, visual) in assignments.

- Create safe, welcoming learning environments.

- Integrate service learning opportunities.

- Identify possible Open Educational Resources

Ideate

Design and development of inclusive courses

STAGE 3: IDEATE: Explore and identify possible solutions in terms of offering inclusive learning activities and experiences

Facilitate multiple means of engagement:

- Provide lecture outlines online that students can annotate during class

- Break large assignments into components so that students can receive formative feedback

- Use circular seating arrangements during discussion to allow students to see one another's faces

- Offer choices of content and tools

- Supplement lecture and reading assignments with visual aids

- Offer office hours in flexible formats

- Create a class climate in which student diversity is respected

  - Generate a list of "ground rules" for classroom conduct
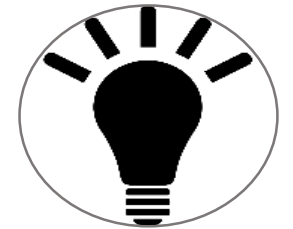
Design and development of inclusive courses

STAGE 4: Prototype: Inclusive course development

- Expand on the ideas in the ideation/brainstorming phase

- Course development

  - Create lesson scripts,

  - **Develop authentic learning activities**, concerning people with with diverse ethnic, cultural and migration background, disability, sexual orientation and religion

  - Divide the content into brief lessons,

  - Develop the presentations (including photos and videos),

  - Create rubrics that identify how assignments will be graded

  - Allow opportunities for students to revise and resubmit for additional credit.

  - Set an LMS template and insert content into the LMS

  - Test and launch the course
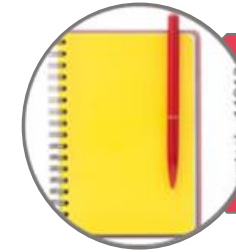
Prototype

Design and development of inclusive courses

STAGE 5: Test— use rubrics to evaluate the course created

Reflect whether you cover the following:

- multiple means of representation and engagement exist

- course media is accessible

- course outline sets the tone for diversity and inclusion (e.g., diversity statement showing the importance and relevance of diversity)

- language is inclusive and the right terminology is used

- inclusive relationships are fostered through welcoming activities, flexible grouping strategies to expose all students to diverse experiences.

- various/accessible teaching materials support learners and diversity (e.g., readings and examples reflect diverse people, voices, and viewpoints)

Further readings

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!