Inclusive Curriculum

An inclusive curriculum anticipates the varied needs of learners and aims to ensure that all students have equal access to educational opportunities.

Inclusivity does not have to require additional work; it just ensures that what you do for all your students includes everybody

An inclusive course is

Flexible

Ready to respond

Able to respond to a diverse and changing student body and the individual needs and preferences of students.

Flexible: ready to respond

Consider:

- Writing learning outcomes which do not specify or limit learning, teaching or assessment methods and tasks.

- Being student-centred, rather than content-centred, accommodating student preferences and needs when designing and selecting activities and tasks.

- Developing more than one assessment method for each task, and consider how to enable an element of student choice in which to take

- Varying your engagement methods and activities which acknowledges students' preferences for different learning styles.

- Involving students in the design and review of teaching and learning activities and use their ongoing feedback on teaching to improve next week's teaching.

An inclusive course is

Consistent

Ensuring a coherent course experience for all

Administration, organisation, teaching, learning and assessment are easy to understand across the course promoting course cohesion and identity.

Consistent: ensuring a coherent course experience for all

Consider:

- Revising documentation each year in response to the formal and informal feedback you receive from students.

- Forming a diverse course documentation group and involving students in writing documentation and testing it is clear and comprehensible.

- Avoiding colloquialisms, jargon and acronyms and be pre-emptive in explaining them where they do occur.

- Taking a consistent course-centred approach to designing teaching to simplify and promote course-level engagement for all students.

- Setting time aside to promote and value student course reps.

An inclusive course is

Equitable

Accessible, engaging and enhancing for all

Ensure any student can fully participate and benefit from the course experience to realise their potential.

Equitable: accessible, engaging and enhancing for all

Consider:

- Working with students to establish reasonable and challenging expectations for *all*.

- Encouraging all students to make good use of lecture notes, slides and handouts beforehand by publishing them at least 24 hrs prior to teaching.

- Raising questions and ideas in advance of teaching so that, in the time you spend together, ideas can be explored more deeply and understanding is developed more than knowledge.

- Encouraging students to try different methods of recording presentations, interventions and discussions, and to share and review these with peers.

- Print all course information and handouts on cream paper to aid readability, especially for dyslexic students.

- Encouraging and enabling revision and review of lectures/seminars by recording them and providing transcribed podcasts on Blackboard.

- Reducing the number of time-limited assessments by scheduling at course level and ensuring that there is more than enough time allocated for any student to do their best and extra time for disabled students becomes largely redundant.

An inclusive course is

Collaborative

Promoting authentic student engagement

Enabling and developing a dynamic and supportive community of practice to mutual benefit.

Collaborative: promoting authentic student engagement

Consider:

- Exploring, developing and negotiating student and staff expectations at the outset of teaching by producing a course 'charter' or set of communally agreed ground rules.

- Involving students in the planning and delivery of the course, as well as its evaluation.

- Using negotiated assessment as a learning activity, involving students in assessment design (including methods, briefing, criteria and feedback) aligned to learning outcomes. This will also improve assessment design.

- Using peer assisted learning so that each student learns about the value of being supportive and supported.

- Using work-related learning so that each student learns about their capabilities and forms a plan for their long-term development needs.

- Being clear about team design so that group tasks can draw on individual and collective differences and strengths, while developing capacity to challenge and address weaknesses.

- Involving employers, international students, staff and partners in student learning through video conferencing and webinars, podcasting, authentic assignment setting, case studies, etc.

An inclusive course is

Personalised

Recognising the value of personal difference

Getting to know students, fostering a sense of belonging and creating a variety of opportunities for individuals to shine.

Personalised: recognising the value of personal difference

Consider:

- Exploring the personal strengths and preferences of students and how they can use these as they address their weaker attributes.

- Supporting and encouraging students as active members of their learning community e.g. through 'learning cells' or 'think-pair-share' activities.

- Using diagnostic formative tasks to promote safe personal reflective engagement early in the course.

- Providing timely personalised feedback. Use electronic and oral methods to improve access and to heighten personal engagement amongst staff and students.

- Negotiating individual assessment methods and criteria. Adding a personalised criterion can heighten the relevance of a task for example.

- Using methods for personal engagement that do not raise anxiety unnecessarily, e.g. Post-it notes, written questions to a forum, etc.

- Allocating students to small groups at first, supporting and managing group work closely to provide clarity and confident participation in discussions and presentations.

An inclusive course is

Diverse

Raising awareness of diversity and global issues

Encouraging students to develop awareness of each others' cultural and learning differences, appreciating diversity as a life-wide and lifelong opportunity and one which is increasingly important globally.

Diverse: awareness of diversity and global issues

Consider:

- Recognising and discussing cultural variety among your students and the ways in which knowledge is culturally constructed.

- Being explicit about academic standards, expected practice and engagement, valuing student interactivity.

- Being explicit about the formative value of assessment and the need for students to gradually assume responsibility for their learning.

- Providing model answers, highlighting and recognising methods of engagement to set expectations.

- Providing a rationale and explanation for practices which may be unfamiliar, e.g. awarding marks for critical thinking, the purpose of referencing, the discursive essay, the nature of literature reviews, etc.

- Actively mixing and pairing students of different backgrounds to break down barriers, build group dynamics and ensure intercultural learning, and highlighting the value to employability.

- Value cultural diversity by choosing culturally diverse examples relevant to your course, particularly embracing non-European cultures and issues.

An inclusive course is

Add your own

Enhancing practice by modifying it - not adding to it

Anticipating the varied needs of students and ensuring equal access and opportunities for learning

Enhancing practice by modifying it - not adding to it

- Consider:

- Involving...

- Avoiding...

- Being...

- Exploring...

- Clarifying...

- ...