



# **Creating intercultural learning environments**

## **Guidelines for staff within Higher Education Institutions**

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Creating intercultural learning environments - Guidelines for staff within Higher Education Institutions

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

According to the most recently available Eurostat figures (2017a), 4.7 million people migrated to one of 28 EU member states in 2015. Most migrants (2.4 million) were non-EU citizens, whilst 1.4 million migrated from one member state to another. Germany accepted the largest number of migrants followed by the UK, France, Spain and Italy.

Migration is one of many strategies employed by European nations in order to address labour market shortages (ENM, 2015), shortages partly caused by declining workplace population in host countries (Beblavy et al, 2015). Whilst these patterns of migration have a long history for some EU member states, others such as Ireland, have transitioned from countries of net emigration to countries of net immigration. This has changed the demographic of Ireland's population making it more ethnically diverse than before.

As well as labour-related migration, many people continue to seek asylum in the EU with patterns largely coinciding with geo-political events. For example, the wars in Kosovo and the Balkans saw increases in those seeking asylum. Recent turmoil in the Middle East has again led to an increase in those seeking asylum from affected regions. In 2016, 1.2 million people applied for international protection in the EU for the first time, most of whom were Syrian, Afghan or Iraqi (Eurostat, 2017b). According to these same Eurostat figures, 6 out of every 10 applicants registered in Germany whilst large increases in those seeking asylum are also reported in Greece and Italy.

## 1.1 Why do we need guidelines for developing intercultural learning environments?

These population movements create socio-cultural changes across Europe including within Higher Education (HE). Successful integration of migrant populations, as well as integration of international students who normally reside outside of European host countries, brings huge benefits for all involved. These include:

- Ensuring education is respectful, and that it celebrates the normality of diversity across human life.
- Building understanding about varying global perspectives.
- Creating empathetic and flexible learning environments.
- Encouraging each of us to adapt to a range of social situations.
- Comprehending cultural complexities and appreciating difference.

Research undertaken by HE4u2 partners (see section 1.2) identifies how migrant students, as well as other students from ethnic and cultural minority backgrounds, can have negative experiences in universities and other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) - HE4u2, 2017, <http://he4u2.eucen.eu/outputs/>. Migrant students in particular report feeling disconnected and isolated from the student experience.

Many factors contribute to this isolation. These include curricula that focus on a 'western' world view<sup>1</sup>, inadequate student's supports and an absence of intercultural spaces for socialising. In some cases, migrant students and students from ethno-cultural minorities experience negative attitudes, discrimination and racism as they go about their day to day activities.

Other times, people who are not affected can be unaware that their own actions can contribute to the status quo. Other university staff who are more conscious of prejudice and discrimination can be unsure how to incorporate inclusive strategies into their working lives. Simple changes can make a significant difference in creating holistic, inclusive environments.

*The European Union strongly condemns all forms of intolerance, racism, racial and other types of discrimination. Based on the principles that all humans are born equal in dignity and rights, the European Union's Charter of Fundamental Rights explicitly prohibits discrimination based on any grounds, whether they be race or colour, sex, origin, religion or belief, or on the grounds of a person's opinion or sexual orientation.*

Council of the European Union 2010

These guidelines offer strategies in developing intercultural environments where diversity is interpreted as both normal and enriching. Inclusive learning strategies apply to all university environments not simply where diversity is visible. Unless this is the case, the dominant ethnicities can interpret their own racialized and cultural identity as the norm (Fitzsimons, 2017).

## 1.2 About this document and about HE4u2

This paper sets out guidelines for creating intercultural learning environments offering both practical and philosophical supports. The guidelines have been designed as part of a European Commission Erasmus+ project called **Integrating cultural diversity in Higher Education** (also known as HE4u2). HE4u2 is grounded in a social justice perspective and its principal focus is to promote inclusion within Higher Education with an emphasis on the experiences of migrant students. The project is coordinated by the European University Continuing Education

<sup>1</sup> The West is interpreted as the social and cultural norms of the capitalist economies of Western Europe and nations of Western European heritage (Fitzsimons, 2017).

Network ([eucen](#)). Its partner organisations are Université catholique de Louvain, BE; Maynooth University, IE; University of Turku, FI; Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, GR; University of Porto, PT; University of Vienna, AT; and Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, DE.

### 1.2.1 How to use this document?

HE4u2 supports an institution-wide approach and this document has been designed to inform all staff working in universities and other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Initially HE4u2 planned on producing two sets of guidelines; one set for academic staff and one set for non-academic staff. Following consultation and in the spirit of inclusion, we decided to produce one set of unifying guidelines that are accessible to people working in a range of roles and from a range of perspectives. Because of this, some of the sections (for example 5.2) refer to activities in the classroom/lecture space and are therefore less relevant to administrative and other support staff. Other sections (for example 5.3) are more relevant to those responsible for university communications policies, for organising the physical environment or for coordinating social and cultural events. The guidelines are organised as follows:

- Terminology
- Guideline aims
- Adult Education Principles that helps inform intercultural education
- How to develop intercultural learning environments
  - Reflections on our own cultural identity.
  - Teaching and learning reforms.
  - Wider institutional reforms.



## 2. TERMINOLOGY

When discussing such concepts as migration, integration and diversity, it is important to be clear about what we mean by these terms. This section outlines how HE4u2 interprets some commonly used expressions that inform these guidelines.

### 2.1 What is a ‘migrant student’?

In determining what a **migrant student** is, HE4u2 supports self-designation. This means that people are reserved the right to self-identify as members of migrant populations. This allows for a multi-generational approach where HE students may be first, second or third generation migrant but still consider themselves part of a wider migrant population.

### 2.2 What do we mean by ‘integration’?

HE4u2 supports the **European Union (EU) Common Basic Principles on Integration** (EU, 2004) which has been included in this document as appendix 1. These principles describe integration as a two-way process that values accommodation, equality, non-discriminatory access to public and private goods and services and the inclusion of migrants in state policy design.





## 2.3 What do we mean by ‘interculturalism’?

**Interculturalism** is a word often used in discussions about diversity. It is important to be explicit about what this word means. For us, interculturalism means not only accepting the principles of equality, rights, values and abilities but also actively promoting cross-cultural interaction, collaboration and exchange (Barrett, 2003: 4). Interculturalism is different to multi-culturalism which refers to the presence of distinct ethnic and cultural groups but not necessarily holistic integration. An intercultural perspective recognises that racism exists and supports efforts to address this.

Importantly, intercultural education should be equally concerned about discrimination against minorities and minority cultural groups who are not migrants. This means other ethnic minority groups such as Travellers or racialized minorities as well as linguistic minority groups.

*“Neither racism nor interculturalism is based on knowledge alone. Both are informed and influenced by emotional responses, feelings and attitudes, as well as by knowledge. Simply providing people with facts and information or focusing on cognitive development will not, on their own, counteract racism, since there may be an emotional resistance to changing one’s mind even in the face of new evidence, facts, or ways of thinking. In particular, the development of positive emotional responses to diversity and an empathy with those discriminated against plays a key role in intercultural education”*

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, Ireland



### 3. GUIDELINES AIMS

The specific aims of **Creating intercultural learning environments - Guidelines for University staff** are:

1. To support academics and non-academics in creating integrated environments where migrant students not only feel welcome but are interpreted as a valuable asset.
2. To create integrated environments where students of ethnic and/or cultural minority backgrounds are not exposed to racism and/or discrimination.
3. To actively promote inclusive teaching techniques and research practices.
4. To address the curriculum needs of all those attending Higher Education.
5. To encourage universities to introduce policy changes that promotes intercultural learning.

*The overall aim of these guidelines is to contribute to the creation of a European Union that is intercultural and that is based on the belief that cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity is to be celebrated.*

<http://he4u2.eucen.eu/outputs/>



## 4. ADULT EDUCATION PRINCIPLES THAT UNDERPIN INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

Everyone who enters a learning group brings experiences, theories and values with them and this is the strongest resource in any learning group (Connolly, 2008). People learn best when they feel part of a learning community and creating intercultural environments means working in a way that is participatory, experiential and relevant to the interests and energies of the people who are in the room. Working interculturally therefore involves being open to processes of education where educators and learners work together to learn and thus different ways of knowing are valued in this context. Certain guiding principles can help to inform this approach.

Where academics and tutors are lecturing to large groups of students, incorporating intercultural teaching methods can be challenging. There are some specific changes to materials that can be made (see section 5.2). Outside of these we recommend an adult education approach as described below.

- People are motivated to learn and act around issues about which they feel strongly about.
- Education should be problem-posing rather than solution-giving. This means that the role of the educator/facilitator is not to deliver answers, but to facilitate people to step-back from and analyse their own lives so they can decide themselves how best to respond.
- Those in a facilitative role are also learners and should be prepared to share and engage as they feel comfortable to do so. Any intercultural setting should be one where university staff also grow as part of the process.
- There is no such thing as a neutral approach to education (Freire, 1991). This means that each of us bring our own opinions, life experiences, viewpoints of the world and thoughts on how we should act within it. These inevitably influences how we act.

## 5. DEVELOPING INTERCULTURAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Developing intercultural learning involves adopting certain guidelines across three distinct categories:

1. Reflections on my own cultural identity and the assumptions I hold.
2. Teaching and research methods.
3. Wider institutional practices and supports.

Although these categories are interconnected, they are presented in this instance one at a time.

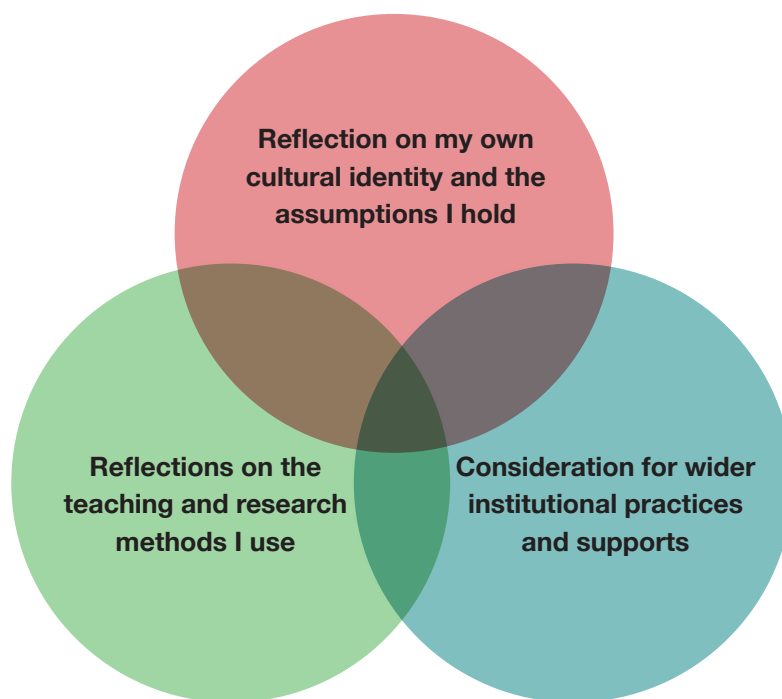


Figure 1 - reflections of educators on the self, practice and institutions

### 5.1 Reflections on my own cultural identity and the assumptions I hold

Although there are some practical changes to the physical environment and to teaching methods that can help to create intercultural learning environments, the most important guideline involves critical reflection on our own cultural and ethnic identity. This includes being open to accepting the prejudices we hold. To do this we must:

- Reflect on our own worldview and think about how we interpret our own ethno-cultural identity.
- Appreciate the multiplicity of our own identities.
- Think about the culturally bound assumptions that shape our interactions with others.

#### Reflective questions might include:

1. What privileges do I hold (race, gender, class etc.) and what power does this give me?
2. Do the ideas I hold about migration come from listening to stories from those affected or from presentations through the media and in political discourse?
3. How might the life-experiences of my students shape their engagement in the university structures?
4. How do I like to be included where I represent a minority culture?

*When modelling curricular change, HE4u2 partners at The Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece took an institution wide approach by acknowledging the need to involve students, staff, administrators, employers, accreditation agencies and government agencies in creating sustainable change. Active partnerships with students were established through discussion on 'cross-cultural capability'. Together, educators and students explored the concept of cultural awareness and began the process of recognising their own cultural values, assumptions and attitudes. There was also discussion on how these values affect people's perception of others.*

*Those involved in the process kept a personal learning log so that each person, both staff and student, could reflect on the impact of this intervention.*

## 5.2 Teaching and Learning reforms

### 5.2.1 The use of Language

Sometimes people can worry about the language they use when trying to capture cultural and ethnic diversity. Usually this is because of a fear of offending people.

There are some expressions that are known to be offensive which should never be used and which won't be repeated here. Other expressions that should be avoided include 'non-national' which implies a person has no nationality. The idea of assimilation should also not be used. This is contrary to EC guidelines on integration (appendix 1) as assimilation refers to a process where members of an ethno-cultural group, often migrants but also other minority groups are absorbed into an unchanged existing culture.

The most important guideline is to appreciate that language is always evolving and that people should feel free to self-determine their identity rather than be led by the perceptions of others.

### 5.2.2 Participatory teaching methods

Integrating diversity in Higher Education (HE4u2) promotes an inclusive approach to teaching and learning. This means creating conditions where students from a variety of backgrounds (social class, gender, ethnicity, culture etc.) are equally valued and where diversity of experience is recognised and actively incorporated. It can be difficult to incorporate participatory teaching methods into lecturing practice where large numbers are present. If this is the case, we suggest that tutorial spaces follow the principles of adult education that are outlined in section 4. Remember, talking openly about interculturalism brings diversity alive and reveals a multitude of experiences and perspectives.

*Remember to think about the language that we use when referring to diversity. Instead of saying a person has “poor German” or “difficulties with English” it is better to say a person is “fluent in Arabic and also has a little German” or is “fluent in Kurdish whilst English is their second language”.*

For teaching staff (academics, tutors, etc.), some specific guidelines to guide this approach are:

- Deliberately create opportunities for meaningful cooperative interactions amongst members of different ethno-cultural groups.
- Create spaces for migrant students and students from ethnic minority backgrounds to contribute to knowledge creation by sharing their experiences and perspectives.
- Ensure reasonable accommodations are made for students regarding the assessment of learning. This could include the use of translation services, referring students to on-campus writing and language centres. It can also include being open to alternative methods of assessment outside of the written word (such as presentations or collaborative group projects) for all students.

### 5.2.3 Curricular changes

Inclusive higher education involves being open to making curricular changes to course materials. Specific guidelines are:

- Ensure that when relevant, curricula incorporate information about specific racial and ethnic groups.
- Ensure that course materials question racialized stereotyping.



- Refer to literature and research developed outside of the Global-North.
- Create conditions for students to introduce literature and research from outside of the Global-North.
- Presentations (e.g. PowerPoints) should draw from images that reflect cultural and ethnic diversity as the norm. They should also reflect gender and age diversity.
- Case-studies and other scenarios should incorporate diversity through such things as the names and the gendered roles given to characters.

*One research finding as part of HE4u2 revealed reports from students that some programs on international affairs tended to take a west-centric approach. When discussing international finance and business practices, US and European perspectives were centralised and there was often little or no emphasis on political, market and entrepreneurial practices in such regions as China or the Middle East.*

### 5.3 Wider institutional reforms

Creating intercultural universities isn't simply about making changes to certain subjects and programs. It is also not simply about changes to the physical environment such as visual displays of diversity, it should be embedded in the practices that inform all aspects of university life. Important communication is relayed to through the physical, social and policy environment of a Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) can indirectly discriminate by failing to promote positive action and forgetting to emphasise equality.

Equally institutions can relay a message of inclusion and integration to those who attend; both students and visitors. Some specific guidelines can help HEIs achieve this.



### 5.3.1 Adherence to Institutional policies on Integration

A good starting point is to find out what policies already exist in institutions as sometimes, staff are unaware of existing policies and recommendations within their own place of work. Staff should contact their international office, equality office or whatever is the equivalent in their institution and check for the following:

- Public statements in support of integration.
- Contact details for student advice and support.
- Existing Guidelines (that may be similar to these) for improving teaching and research practice.

HE4u2 partners have provided samples of this documents from the institutions involved (appendix 2). Once equipped with information on institutional approaches, these policies can be shared within the department you are working in.

Where policies are absent, university staff should work to create these policies ensuring they are in line with national and international recommendations. This could involve creating an institutional working group to develop policy positions and encouraging institutions to organise workshops in inclusive practice.

**At the University of Vienna, Austria, HE4u2 partners organised workshops to support teachers in implementing curricular change. Educators were introduced to diversity-friendly didactic material and methods including how to reflect on critical incidents and supporting language differentials and multilingualism and reasonable accommodations in the assessment of learning. New methods introduced included**

- Starting a session off with defining a glossary of relevant technical/ academic vocabulary.
- Introducing an exercise of de-centration through images to sensitize students for internalized cultural values and their importance for relating to others and making value judgements
- Revising examination criteria to make them more transparent and equipped to attend to different types of learners

**A resource kit for educators was created which integrated intercultural didactic support at institutional level**



### 5.3.2 The physical and social environment

Research carried out by HE4u2 found that both a lack of social integration and a lack of tailored supports created significant difficulties for some students. Here are some suggestions on how to address this:

- Institutions should actively support the development of student societies.
- When social gatherings are organised, institutions should consult with a diverse range of students in order to accommodate difference and to ensure that events are sensitive to the timetabling of religious events such as Ramadan or Lent.
- Institutions should provide quiet spaces that all students have access to.
- Institutions should ensure a variety of culinary options that are sensitive to religious and cultural differences.
- Institutions should ensure appropriate and accessible signage that reflects language diversity.

#### Check-list for ensuring intercultural physical and social environment

- Does the website reflect cultural and ethnic diversity through the pictures and text it uses?
- Do canteen facilities cater for a range of tastes and religious preferences?
- Do artistic representations and symbols present diversity
- Are there social spaces that accommodate religious and social diversity (e.g. non-alcoholic gatherings)?
- Are there adequate and accessible language supports in place?
- Is university signage translated into commonly spoken languages?
- Are there strategies in place for dealing with discriminatory behaviour and for adequately reporting racism?

### 5.3.3 Recognition of International Qualifications and Recognition of Prior Learning

Many migrants and also staff are unaware of national services that support the recognition of prior learning and inconsistencies across HEIs as well as inconsistencies within the same institutions have been recorded (Lenihan and Hogan, 2008). Lenihan and Hogan (2008: 106) note *“If prior learning is not recognised, there is a real danger of developing an occupational gap, with many third-level migrants not given the recognition they earned while in many cases being overqualified for the level of employment they are offered”*.

Recognition of prior learning is a central pillar of The Bologna Declaration. For migrants a particular difficulty often relates to recognition of prior **formal learning**.

The EC requires each Higher Education Institution (HEI) to have policies in place on the recognition of both formal and non-formal prior learning. All staff should be familiar with who is responsible for these policies so migrant students can be advised accordingly.

## 5.4 Responding to discrimination and racism

As well as reflecting on our own practice, it is important that each of us hold true to the EU common basic principle of **“access for immigrants to institutions...on a basis equal to national citizens and in a non-discriminatory way”** (appendix 1). Sometimes discrimination results from ‘deficit notions’ about migrant and ethnic minority students where, without being consciously aware of it, educators can think of migrant students as in some way deficient (Acquah and Commins, 2016).

In reality people can hold multiple national identities, particularly where one or more are based on ancestral heritage (Allen, 2010: 8; Lynch, 2013).

Sometimes staff can witness another person experiencing prejudice or racism or being at the receiving end of hate speech. Make sure you are aware of the structures that exist within your institution for reporting these incidents as well as national structures including policing.

Remember staff of ethnic and/or cultural minority backgrounds can also experience discrimination and racism.

In 2016, the European Commission along with IT companies (such as google, twitter and Facebook) announced a code of conduct on illegal hate speech.

*“By signing this code of conduct, the IT companies commit to continuing their efforts to tackle illegal hate speech online. This will include the continued development of internal procedures and staff training to guarantee that they review the majority of valid notifications for removal of illegal hate speech in less than 24 hours and remove or disable access to such content, if necessary. The IT companies will also endeavour to strengthen their ongoing partnerships with civil society organisations who will help flag content that promotes incitement to violence and hateful conduct. The IT companies and the European Commission also aim to continue their work in identifying and promoting independent counter-narratives, new ideas and initiatives, and supporting educational programs that encourage critical thinking”*

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-16-1937\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-1937_en.htm), sourced 14th April 2017.

HEI policies on the use of social platforms should mirror this commitment and support IT companies by reporting establishing local policies on social media and internet platform use and by reporting inappropriate content expediently.

## APPENDIX 1 – EUROPEAN COUNCIL COMMON BASIC PRINCIPLES ON INTEGRATION

1. Integration is a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States.
2. Integration implies respect for the basic values of the European Union.
3. Employment is a key part of the integration process and is central to the participation of immigrants, to the contributions immigrants make to the host society, and to making such contributions visible.
4. Basic knowledge of the host society's language, history, and institutions is indispensable to integration; enabling immigrants to acquire this basic knowledge is essential to successful integration.
5. Efforts in education are critical to preparing immigrants, and particularly their descendants, to be more successful and more active participants in society.
6. Access for immigrants to institutions, as well as to public and private goods and services, on a basis equal to national citizens and in a non-discriminatory way is a critical foundation for better integration.
7. Frequent interaction between immigrants and Member State citizens is a fundamental mechanism for integration. Shared forums, inter-cultural dialogue, education about immigrants and immigrant cultures, and stimulating living conditions in urban environments enhance the interactions between immigrants and Member State citizens.
8. The practice of diverse cultures and religions is guaranteed under the Charter of Fundamental Rights and must be safeguarded, unless practices conflict with other inviolable European rights or with national law.
9. The participation of immigrants in the democratic process and in the formulation of integration policies and measures, especially at the local level, supports their integration.
10. Mainstreaming integration policies and measures in all relevant policy portfolios and levels of government and public services is an important consideration in public-policy formation and implementation.
11. Developing clear goals, indicators and evaluation mechanisms are necessary to adjust policy, evaluate progress on integration and to make the exchange of information more effective.

## APPENDIX 2 –COUNTRY POLICIES ON DIVERSITY

### Maynooth University, Ireland

Maynooth University's **Equality Strategy** (2014-2016) has carried out a policy audit and a review of structural processes under each of the nine grounds of discrimination (gender, civil status, family status, religion, age, disability, race, membership of the Traveller community) detailed in the **Equality Act 2004**.

The Equality Strategy also promotes equality awareness training and Maynooth University are participants of the **LEAD (Living Equality and Diversity) Programme** (<http://www.leadequalitynetwork.com>). This is an Irish Universities Association Equality Network eLearning programme on Equality and Diversity which offers online resources designed to give a general understanding of how we can all play our part in supporting inclusive environments which promote equality and value diversity.

National reporting of racism and discrimination

If a member of academic or non-academic staff experiences, witnesses or hears about a racist incident we encourage them to report this through [ireport.ie](http://ireport.ie), a national, confidential online tool that supports the monitoring of racism in Ireland.

In 2000, An Garda Síochána (the Irish Police Force) established a Garda Racial and Intercultural Office. This office has responsibility for co-ordinating, monitoring and advising on all aspects of policing in the area of ethnic and cultural diversity. Their contact number is 01-6663150 or email [crimprev@iol.ie](mailto:crimprev@iol.ie)

## University of Vienna, Austria

Diversity is a main element of the university's mission and strategic development efforts. Diversity – in terms of personal and social background of students, teachers and employees as well as in relation to a variety of disciplines offered or theoretical and methodical approaches used – is viewed as factor enhancing the academic quality of research and teaching. The University of Vienna commits to creating and promoting a diversity oriented institutional culture, actively working to combat discrimination and disadvantage and to develop targeted measures to support equality of opportunities for members of marginalised groups among students and staff.<sup>2</sup>

Internationalisation efforts aim at increasing students' and teachers' mobility, further developing the range of studies in a different language than German, facilitating multilingualism and intercultural competences of students and teachers.<sup>3</sup>

All diversity-related activities pursued by the University of Vienna (in research, teaching, support etc.) are displayed on the online-platform: <http://diversity.univie.ac.at/en/>

2 See University of Vienna (2015): Universität Wien 2020 Entwicklungsplan, pp 11-16. URL: <https://www.univie.ac.at/rektorenteam/ug2002/entwicklung.pdf>

3 See University of Vienna (2015): International Report 2015, pp 8. URL: [https://www.univie.ac.at/uploads/media/International\\_Report\\_2015\\_01.pdf](https://www.univie.ac.at/uploads/media/International_Report_2015_01.pdf)

## University of Mainz, Germany

### Diversity strategy

Developing and implementing a diversity strategy is the first step towards targeted diversity management at JGU. Given the growing diversity of our members, the intended diversity strategy aims at taking into account all status groups at JGU.

Therefore, we have involved as many members as possible in the strategic development process from the very beginning. In addition to the steering group and the coordinating group which both accompany the auditing process, the working group 'diversity' was founded.

As part of the diversity audit "Vielfalt gestalten" (shaping diversity) the diversity strategy of JGU aims at the following:

- All members of JGU – regardless of age, gender, race, national origin, social and ethnic background, religion, sexual identity and orientation, physical abilities and individual life style – should be able to participate fully and equally in university life.
- Students' academic success should not depend on aforementioned characteristics.
- Excellent research and teaching need to be ensured. In doing so, we increase potential for innovation.
- The homogenous character of academic environment is to be dismantled.
- We strive for a cultural change that sees the growing diversity of students and employees as an opportunity and enrichment rather than as a problem.

### Philosophy

The Johannes-Gutenberg University Mainz (JGU) values the cultural, social and individual diversity of its members. Our diversity strategy focuses on creating equal opportunities, fighting discrimination and abolishing exclusion mechanisms. Additionally, it aims at actively fostering a diversity-oriented teaching, learning, research and working environment, which includes the acknowledgement and support of different life styles.

Today, society faces challenges such as globalized and ever changing living and working patterns, lack of skilled labour and demographic development. These challenges require a change of culture. Accordingly, we here at JGU regard the heterogeneity among our students and employees as an opportunity. By promoting a diversity-oriented environment, JGU assumes societal responsibility as educational institution and advocates for more educational justice.

<http://www.blogs.uni-mainz.de/diversity/> (English)

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Culturally diverse educational spaces are a valuable resource. Ensuring meaningful integration also brings challenges as, often, university staff are unsure how to create collaborative, intercultural spaces. These guidelines are designed to help staff by suggesting simple but effective changes in our practice. They also encourage wider institutional changes and support appropriate integration policies. Fundamentally, these guidelines are built on the belief that diversity benefits all of us regardless of our socio-cultural and ethnic identities.

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