Purpose and use

With this tool, you can make a diagnosis of the extent to which a degree programme in its current form provides diversity-sensitive teaching and learning and get ideas for improvements. The tool also serves as an instrument for reflection and discussion amongst teams of teaching staff and students about the diversity sensitivity of a study programme as a whole (see for more information: www.learningindiversity.com).

The tool consists of a selection of key questions on diversity sensitive teaching regarding the following categories:

- Strategy, policy and rationale
- Exit qualifications and learning goals
- Content
- Assessment tasks
- Teaching & learning arrangements
- Inclusive environment
- Teacher competences

At the end of each category of questions, a number of references is included where you can find suggestions for improvements and examples.

What is diversity-sensitive education?

Diversity-sensitive education involves learning *about* and learning *in* diversity. Learning about diversity is part of preparing students to become professionals who are able to adequately deal with diversity themes within their professional or scientific field. Furthermore, it involves the development of 'cross-curricular' competences that are related to diversity. These are capabilities that all students of an institution, regardless of their field of study, have to acquire (for example critical reasoning and competences for academic citizenship). Learning in diversity means that the diversity within the student group is intentionally used as a resource for learning, for example by stimulating interaction and cooperation. Finally, diversity-sensitive education concerns the provision of an *inclusive learning environment*, in which all students, regardless of their backgrounds or characteristics, feel confident to learn and that enables them to develop their talents.

An intersectional approach to diversity lies at the basis of this guideline and the tools and resources that are part of it. Intersectionality means that somebody's social identity is not perceived in terms of just one aspect of it (such as gender, social class, religion, cultural background, sexual orientation) but that these aspects together shape somebody's perceived and experienced social identity. All these different aspects coexist, mutually reinforce each other and determine the individual's unique social location. Moreover, the broader social environment, characterized by privileging some social identities while opposing others, influences the way a person experiences his or her specific social location in society.

Despite the intersectional approach, you will notice that we sometimes do speak about different groups of students based on one aspect of social identity, for example 'international students' or 'bicultural students'. This is done because it is important to be aware of possible mechanisms of social injustice that can occur in the way teaching and learning are organized and that harm specific group of students. However, the fact that we sometimes speak about different groups does not mean that the social identity of individuals in this group is reduced to just this one aspect.

Theory and practice-based

This tool is based on the diversity scans that are implemented at VU Amsterdam (2012-2016) and on national and international tools[1] for the development of diversity-sensitive and internationalized study programmes. The questions do not cover all specific aspects of diversity-sensitive education but are meant as an incentive to start reflection and discussion among the teaching staff and students. The title of some resources may give you the idea that they are focused on just one specific aspect of diversity, such as culture or international differences (e.g. 'Quick guides on teaching and learning across cultures' or 'Internationalizing the Curriculum'). However, these sources are based on a broader definition of diversity (not limited to one aspect), in line with the definition this tool is based on.

Instructions

This document is a resource for use by a degree programme in determining the aspects of the curriculum on which the diversity scan and the improvement process will or should focus.

A number of key indicators are described for all seven aspects, based on literature and research. When thinking about the indicators, each indicator is rated on a three-point scale that reflects how indicative this is for the current and desired situation in the degree programme. This gives a clear picture of the differences between the current and desired situation. Questions are asked for each theme, with the discrepancy between the current and desired situation indicating how high the priority is for the theme in question.

The coordinator of the process for improvement of diversity-sensitive teaching then discusses the findings with the core team. Important questions to be considered here are:

- Do our views on the current and desired situation per theme correspond, or do we differ in this respect?
- What are the themes and indicators that show the greatest discrepancy between the current and the desired situation?
- Which of these themes are currently the greatest cause for concern or cause of problems (among students, lecturers, managers or administrators)?

The scan and improvement process (see the phases in the manual) is then initially focused on these more urgent themes. Once the scan and improvement process for these themes has been completed, it is advisable to carry out the quick scan once again and to address other urgent themes.

Tip: involve (international) students when discussing the indicators and the priority of themes.

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[1] I specifically want to thank prof. dr. Betty Leask and her colleagues of 'Internationalisation of the Curriculum in Action' for their work and making it publically accessible by a creative commons license. Support for the original work was provided by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council Ltd, an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. The documents and tools they delivered have been used for the development of this tool.

Below you will find indicators for the seven aspects of diversity sensitive-teaching and learning. For every aspect, you are asked to indicate with a number to what extent this indicator characterizes the current and desired situation. 1 = not at all; 2 = to some extent; 3= strongly.

Strategy, policy and rationale

Indicators:	Current situation (1 – 3)	Desired situation (1 – 3)
The department stated goals related to diversity and internationalization in policy statements on education.		
The theme of diversity-sensitive teaching and learning is the responsibility and authority of a dedicated staff member at management level. The implementation and evaluation of related activities (e.g. to scan and improve the programme) is the responsibility of several staff members of the degree programme, who report to the manager of diversity-sensitive teaching and learning.		
Exit qualifications of the degree programme related to diversity competences are accepted, supported and owned by the whole programme team. They are also clearly articulated and communicated to all staff and students.		
The staff acknowledges that teaching needs to take account of students as learners with a variety of backgrounds, skills, learning preferences, abilities and disabilities.		
Reasons to pay attention to a diversity-sensitive curriculum are frequently discussed and debated by members of the programme team, aimed at a shared understanding and agreement about this.		

Reflecting on the differences in scores between the current and desired situation, do you consider the priority to focus the attention on 'Strategy, policy and rationale' as low, medium or strong?

Looking for ideas or examples?
- Diversity policy documents of VU Amsterdam (only in Dutch): http://www.vu.nl/nl/over-de-vu/profiel-en-missie/uitgelicht/diversiteit/index.aspx
- *Geconcretiseerde Onderwijsvisie Know VU*: https://knowvu.nl/home/ow-visie/
- Educational strategy of your department

Exit qualifications and learning goals for diversity competences

Diversity-related competences and learning goals are aimed at the development of skills, knowledge, attitude, reflection and self-reflection that students need to acquire for their future profession and citizenship in a multicultural, diverse and globalized environment.

Please indicate with a number to what extent the indicators characterize the current and desired situation. 1 = not at all; 2 = to some extent; 3= strongly

Indicators:	Current situation (1 – 3)	Desired situation (1 – 3)
Exit qualifications related to diversity competences are described in formal information on the degree programme, with specific reference to the important values, skills and knowledge of the discipline and related professions.		
Across the programme, there is a focus on students' progressive development of the required diversity competences.		
Responsibility for developing students' diversity competences is shared across the staff of the programme.		
The question of how students develop diversity competences and what they will need to achieve this is an important aspect of reflecting on, designing and redesigning the programme (or parts of the programme).		

Reflecting on the differences in scores between the current and desired situation, do you consider the priority to focus the attention on 'Exit qualifications and learning goals' as low, medium or strong?

Looking for ideas or examples?
   - Taxonomy of intercultural competences (Ridings, Simpson, Leask et al, 2008; see Fig 5.1 on p. 65 of the book Internationalizing the Curriculum by Betty Leask, 2015)
   - Formulation of intended learning outcomes at course level: Chapter 6 of Internationalizing the Curriculum by Betty Leask, 2015.
   - Diversity aims at institutional or programme level: Chapter 5 of Internationalizing the Curriculum by Betty Leask, 2015.
   - Examples from diversity scans at www.learningindiversity.com
   - Quick guide to Curriculum design, Teaching and learning across cultures [www.ieaa.org.au/resourcesarchive/learning-teaching-across-cultures]

Curriculum Content

Please indicate with a number to what extent the indicators characterize the current and desired situation. 1 = not at all; 2 = to some extent; 3= strongly

Indicators:	Current situation (1 – 3)	Desired situation (1 – 3)
Curriculum design, specifically the selection of programme and course topics, is linked to the goals of the institution and the faculty and is related to the development of diversity competences.		
The content and teaching materials (text books, readings, lecture slides, etc.) of the programme refer to theoretical, empirical and practical knowledge and skills regarding the theme of diversity, in which a broad range of viewpoints and ways of thinking in the discipline are presented, invited and rewarded.		
Cases, problems and tasks that are used and discussed are authentic, located in diverse contexts (culturally and nationally) and challenge students to engage with multiple perspectives and points of view.		
The use of teaching materials that inadequately represent diverse perspectives and experiences (generalizations, 'us versus them', stigmatization, dichotomous thinking) is avoided.		

Reflecting on the differences in scores between the current and desired situation, do you consider the priority to focus the attention on 'Curriculum Content' as low, medium or strong?

Looking for ideas or examples?

- *'Meetladder Diversiteit Onderwijs'* by Pels et al. (2012), p. 12 and 13 (N.B. specifically for social fields of studies). www.verwey-jonker.nl/doc/jeugd/Meetladder-Diversiteit-Onderwijs_2934_web.pdf
- Examples of revised programmes/courses:
  - http://transnationalteachingteams.org/cases.html
  - Reports on diversity scans at VU Amsterdam [link to future website DSVU]
- A quick guide to curriculum design in 'Learning and teaching across cultures', Leask and Carroll (2013). [www.ieaa.org.au/resourcesarchive/learning-teaching-across-cultures]
- Page 13 and 14 of the Checklist Programme Internationalization by Reeb-Gruber (2009), INHolland University

- Chapter 3 'A conceptual framework for internationalization of the curriculum' from Internationalizing the Curriculum by Leask (2015).

Assessment tasks

Please indicate with a number to what extent the indicators characterize the current and desired situation. 1 = not at all; 2 = to some extent; 3= strongly

Indicators:	Current situation (1 – 3)	Desired situation (1 – 3)
Assessment tasks are set so as to develop diversity competences.		
Diversity competences are taught and assessed at different year levels in the programme. The programme provides multiple opportunities for practice in a safe environment (see theme Inclusive Education) and feedback is given so that students progressively develop their competences as they progress through the course of study.		
Patterns of assessment, task completions and results are systematically analysed for signs of any difficulties that they might present to particular groups of students.		
Assessment tasks are not culturally context-specific (unless this has been specifically taught).		

Reflecting on the differences in scores between the current and desired situation, do you consider the priority to focus the attention on 'Assessment tasks' as low, medium or strong?

Looking for ideas or examples?

- Quick Guide to assessment in Learning and teaching across cultures, Leask & Carroll (2013). [https://www.ieaa.org.au/resourcesarchive/learning-teaching-across-cultures]
- Tools to develop diversity-sensitive assessment tasks [http://learningindiversity.com/step-4-diversity-inclusion-scan/]

Teaching and learning arrangements

Please indicate with a number to what extent the indicators characterize the current and desired situation. 1 = not at all; 2 = to some extent; 3= strongly

Indicators:	Current situation (1 – 3)	Desired situation (1 – 3)
Throughout the programme, there is a visible link between the teaching and learning tasks that are organized and the intended diversity competences.		
Activities and tasks of the programme overtly use and value students' diverse experiences, knowledge and skills by facilitating interaction and cooperation where students have to exchange ideas and reflect on this diversity.		
The benefits as well as the challenges of engaging in dialogue and cooperation in a context of diversity are specifically outlined in course and programme materials.		
Teaching and learning arrangements are designed with explicit consideration for the diversity within the student population.		
Teaching and learning arrangements are designed with sensitivity for the diversity that characterizes students' progress toward exit qualifications of the degree programme (due to their diverse entry level, knowledge, skills and experiences).		

Reflecting on the differences in scores between the current and desired situation, do you consider the priority to focus the attention on 'Teaching and learning arrangements' as low, medium or strong?

Looking for ideas or examples?

- A Quick guide to managing group work of 'Learning and teaching across cultures' by Leask & Carroll (2013). [www.ieaa.org.au/resources/learning-teaching-across-cultures]
- Chapter 7 'Using student diversity' in Internationalizing the Curriculum by Leask (2015).

Inclusive Environment

Please indicate with a number to what extent the indicators characterize the current and desired situation. 1 = not at all; 2 = to some extent; 3= strongly

Indicators:	Current situation (1 – 3)	Desired situation (1 – 3)
The programme is characterized by an inclusive learning environment. This means that the degree programme is relevant, meaningful and accessible for all students regardless of their background or personal characteristics (domestic, migrant, minority, refugee, international, disabled) and that students feel safe and valued when contributing new perspectives.		
Staff who design programmes are provided with information and assistance to put inclusive practice principles into practice.		
Teachers are aware of the dangers of stereotyping, making assumptions, micro-aggressions and over-generalizing on the basis of, for example, students' language skills, cultural background, religion or disabilities.		
Teachers create a supportive learning environment for interaction, where they are attentive to possible negative interactions and experiences of students in diverse groups and they guide students as to how to deal with these.		
Teaching and support staff are aware of the special needs of different groups of students (including language needs).		
Evaluation at course and programme level specifically focuses on inclusive teaching practices.		

Reflecting on the differences in scores between the current and desired situation, do you consider the priority to focus the attention on 'Inclusive Education' as low, medium or strong?

Looking for ideas or examples?

- A guide to internationalization of the curriculum and inclusive teaching in transnational education by Transnational Teaching Teams: http://transnationalteachingteams.org/restoolkit_1.html
- Quick guide to managing group work of learning and teaching across cultures. [www.ieaa.org.au/resourcesarchive/learning-teaching-across-cultures]

- Checklist Programme Internationalization by Reeb-Gruber (2009), INHolland University, p. 15
- Creating inclusive college classrooms by Saunders and Kardia (2010). http://www.crlt.umich.edu/gsis/p3_1
- 'Promising practices' for inclusive teaching and learning. Via: http://www.ioc.global/resources.html
- *Meetladder Diversiteit Onderwijs* by Pels et al. (2012), p. 14-17.
- Student feedback on inclusive education: examples of topic lists for students' perspectives [http://learningindiversity.com/step-2a-diversity-inclusion-scan/]
- Quick guide to 'Developing English language skills' [www.ieaa.org.au/resourcesarchive/learning-teaching-across-cultures]
- Quick guide 'Working with student learning services' [www.ieaa.org.au/resources/learning-teaching-across-cultures]

Teacher competences for diversity-sensitive teaching

Please indicate with a number to what extent the indicators characterize the current and desired situation. 1 = not at all; 2 = to some extent; 3= strongly

Indicators:	Current situation (1 – 3)	Desired situation (1 – 3)
The teachers of the degree programme are engaged with diversity-sensitive teaching and learning.		
The teachers model appropriate behaviour and display diversity awareness, sensitivity and responsivity. For example, they model respect for differing ways of seeing and knowing in different cultures.		
The teachers are open to feedback on their teaching by their students and take signs of problems or inconveniences for particular groups of students seriously.		
The programme team models and exemplifies productive interaction across diversity. Team members refer to and draw upon their own and their peers' cultural and linguistic diversity.		
There are facilities available for teachers to increase and update their knowledge of diversity and international issues within their discipline.		

Looking for ideas or examples?
- Quick guide for Teachers in learning and teaching across cultures
  [www.ieaa.org.au/resources/learning-teaching-across-cultures]
- Quick guide to Effective professional development of teachers in learning and teaching across cultures
  [www.ieaa.org.au/resourcesarchive/learning-teaching-across-cultures]
- Teacher trainings in diversity
  [www.hesterradstake.nl/trainingen]

Reflecting on the differences in scores between the current and desired situation, do you consider the priority to focus the attention on 'Teacher competences' as low, medium or strong?

Ranking of the curriculum aspects

Indicate what curriculum aspects need attention in your point of view, by giving ranking them from 1 (most important) to 7 (least important). Use your answers on the final open question of each aspect.

	Rank	Elaboration
Strategy, policy and rationale		
Exit qualifications and learning goals		
Content		
Assessment tasks		
Teaching and learning arrangements		
Inclusive environment		
Teaching competences		