

Creating inclusive learning environments

The Royal Holloway DCLinPsy is committed to creating learning environments that are inclusive, supportive, and thoughtful about the similarities and differences that exist between all of us. We recognise that learning environments are more likely to be experienced as inclusive by individuals who are part of a majority, whether that be in terms of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, ability etc. We are committed to providing training that:

- is actively inclusive, anti-racist, and non-discriminatory
- helps trainees to think critically about the models that shape our knowledge
- integrates thoughtful consideration about difference throughout all aspects of training
- gives trainees access to multiple and regular examples of working clinically with difference

To support lecturers in working towards these aspirations we have developed some ideas which we hope you will find helpful. Feedback is welcome (Jessica.kingston@rhul.ac.uk, Course Diversity Lead)

1. Process of teaching

Talking about difference can feel difficult. Often people hold back, perhaps due to concerns about getting it wrong. We are endeavouring to create open learning environments where it is okay to not have all the answers and/or for people to have different opinions. Discussing difference allows important conversations to take place, and differences of opinion to be discussed respectfully. We consider the following points to be especially helpful in creating these environments:

- **Modelling openness**, such as by saying that you aim to provide teaching that is inclusive and sensitive to a range of world views and life experiences, and that what you know is based on your own experiences and learning. This may help encourage others to share their views along the way.
- **It is OK 'not to know'**. We all bring a wealth of experience to teaching and it is expected that people will bring different viewpoints. We see this as an opportunity to learn.

You may also consider:

- Contextualising your view (e.g., positioning yourself such as “as a White Clinical Psychologist...”).
- Using your pronouns, such as on your opening slide / zoom name ([Learn more about pronouns](#)).

2. Session content

Please allocate some time to talk about and/or reflect on aspects of difference and diversity that are relevant to your session. We consider the following points to be especially important:

- **Creating opportunities for critical thinking**, such as discussing and reflecting critically on models/theories/the evidence base. For example, what country do the ideas come from, what worldviews might have influenced the ideas, what demographics is the evidence-base based on, how might culture shape how we understand x.
- **Incorporating consideration of different, diversity and/or culture into key topics** in your session, such as formulation, intervention, therapeutic relationship, engagement, prevalence rates etc.
- **Using examples** (e.g., vignettes / case discussions / videos etc.) that relate to a wide range of human experience and that is mindful to avoid stereotypes
- **Having references** that prompt consideration of difference, diversity and/or cultural competence.

Some specific examples could be:

- Considering how difficulties may manifest differently across different groups of people (e.g., in collectivist cultures, depression may differ in its expression; in Asian communities, there is a greater prevalence of xxx than in White British communities; LGBT+ communities are more likely to report xxx when talking about depression).
- Using structured prompts within the session for trainees to pause and reflect (e.g., how might our different backgrounds affect how we think about X; how might your cultural background affect your understanding of Y; how might the media affect current cultural understanding of Z).
- Having a learning objective that focus on difference, diversity and/or cultural competence.
- Sharing ideas about any adaptations of a particular way of working to enhance its effectiveness with a particular group.
- Discussing initiatives within your service that relate to difference, diversity and/or cultural competence.
- Discussing other viewpoints (e.g., Asian scholars... Black scholars...).

3. Practical considerations

Some trainees have ways of learning that require adaptations. Please think about the accessibility of your slides using the points below. Please also make slides available 48 hours before your session.

- To assist people with low vision, please use high-contrast text/backgrounds, easy to read fonts, and large print. As best you can, please also ensure visuals are explained orally
- As best you can, please ensure that the main pieces of information given orally are also captured in the materials.
- Check your slides can be read by screen-reading software where possible (see link below).
- For individuals with dyslexia, please aim to reduce the complexity of language where possible.

More guidance on making PowerPoint presentations accessible to people with disabilities can be found here: [Make your PowerPoint presentations accessible to people with disabilities \(microsoft.com\)](https://microsoft.com/en-gb/makeyourpowerpointaccessible)