

Good Practice Guidelines to Diversifying the Curriculum

How to read this document

The aim of these guidelines is to inspire and encourage members of the Oxford law teaching team to consider practices that may help to set reading lists that are inclusive and diverse. An inclusive curriculum aims to improve the experience and skills of all students, ensuring that, regardless of background, they are able to participate fully and achieve at equal rates. It seeks to advance the broader academic goal of critical reflection, and although it is intended to improve inclusivity primarily with respect to ethnicity, gender, sexuality and disability, it can readily be extended to other protected-interest groups.

This document, however, is not a manual for how to diversify the curriculum. The guidelines are based on a collective exercise in 'curriculum health check' that draws on [UCL's Inclusive Curriculum Health Checklist 2018](#), and which the Law Faculty agreed to undertake following a workshop and a Faculty seminar in 2019, on [Diversifying the Curriculum](#).

The focus is on diversity of sources, which includes diversity of both authors' origins and the range of perspectives represented in materials. What the guidelines underline is that an inclusive curriculum is both pedagogically necessary and academically rigorous. Moreover, diversifying the curriculum is not a one-off event, but a continuous exercise and collective effort.

Steps taken to diversify the curriculum at Oxford Law Faculty:

1. [Review](#) of a selection of key journals to identify scholarship that touches upon issues of ethnicity, discrimination, race, colour, intersectionality, colonialism, diversity and critical race theory and other disciplinary approaches.
2. Establishing best practice and sharing thoughts with colleagues in the particular subject field in other universities by organising/taking part in (virtual) discussion.
3. Including perspectives on class, gender, and power into the syllabus, inviting students to reflect on the underlying social values of particular rules.
4. Introducing new topics such as post-colonial history to provide context to the subject; or investigating historical changes to key concepts in the subject.
5. Revising the reading list by tasking tutors (on a voluntary basis) to investigate possible diversification opportunities on a particular topic from the reading list.
6. Revising the reading list by student-led input by inviting student representatives to teaching group meetings, or inviting students to express their views and make any suggestions directly to the convenor.

7. Creating electives with focus on ethnicity, gender, sexuality and/or disability and allowing students to choose a particular critical lens.
8. Revising the reading list with particular focus on jurisdictions covered in the set course, in particular when the course draws on a variety of jurisdictions, and making sure to incorporate Global North and South jurisdictions.
9. Make explicit gender/race implications on some of the key case law/specific rules on the reading list and questions of injustice and public policy across all topics.

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