



**Utrecht  
University**

# Manual Reflection Tools

USO-project Creating an Inclusive Curriculum and Learning Environment

## Table of contents

1. About this manual	3
2. What is the Reflection Tool and why use it?	4
3. Procedure	6
Appendix 1. Possible structure for discussion outcomes reflection tools	8

## 1. About this manual

In this booklet teachers and course coordinators can find background information about the reflection tool and its use. This information is helpful should they wish to prepare a meeting with fellow-teachers or with students to discuss the outcomes of the tool. For teachers or students who are not coordinating such a meeting, the short introduction given in the Reflection Tool itself suffices.

## 2. What is the Reflection Tool and why use it?

From September 2020 onwards, we have been working on a project called "Developing an Inclusive Curriculum and Learning Environment". The goal of this project is to make the curriculum more inclusive and make the UU a safer learning environment. To aid in this goal we have developed a reflection tool. Its purpose is to reflect on the current state of inclusive teaching in your course. It is not an assessment or evaluation tool but can be used as a starting point to find out what could be the most important course element(s) to adapt in your course to make the course more inclusive. There are three versions of the reflection tool: (1) the programme level version, (2) the teacher version and (3) the student version. The teacher version of the reflection tool can be used by individual teachers or course coordinators or by the teaching team to reflect on the inclusiveness and diversity within the course. Experiences from other teachers show that filling out the reflection is most useful when it is used to start a discussion about all or specific aspects of the reflection tool. Besides teachers, students may fill out the student version of the reflection tool to further aid the reflection on the course. The Programme level curriculum reflection tool is usually filled out by programme directors or coordinators and the management team of a programme.

You might have some questions about working on inclusivity and diversity. Here are some of the most common worries/questions answered:

Q. I feel overwhelmed by the concept of inclusivity and diversity, where to start?

It is such a complex topic. What is diversity, which aspects of diversity are meant, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, disability, etc? Diversity entails so many aspects and I don't know how to cater for all. In addition, inclusive teaching entails so many different areas, for example: assessment, course literature, or the relation teachers have with their students.

A. The reflection tool may help you to make an informed decision on where to start as you, your teacher team and your students will systematically reflect on a very broad range of different aspects of diversity and education.

Q. I don't know where I can find the time to do this?

A. There is no denying that working on the reflection tool will take some time. However, two things are important to realize. First, the time you invest now in improving your course will have benefits not only for the students in that year but also in the many years after. Second, you can spread the hours you work on this over the span of the course whenever it suits you best.

Q. There are no signs that the content of my course was not inclusive. So why would I need to do this?

A. In current evaluation systems, questions on inclusive education are not included, so in most places at UU there is no place for students to give feedback on this topic. The student version of the reflection tool may help you to do this. Besides, you may not be aware that certain actions or aspects of the course unintentionally exclude or hurt certain students as they often do not feel comfortable to speak up. This was also apparent in focus groups that were held university-wide with students on their experiences regarding diversity and inclusion at the UU. A selection of these experiences are found in the reflection tool.

These experiences show that, for instance, the design of a course could exclude some students, mostly unintentionally. The reflection tool facilitates reflection on the role inclusion on different course elements:

- Learning objectives;
- Teaching and learning activities;
- Learning materials;
- Assessment;
- The role of the teacher.

For the programme level curriculum tool, the following programme elements are covered:

- Policy
- Strategy
- Programme level learning objectives
- Curriculum Design
- Inclusive environment
- Teacher competencies for diverse and inclusive education

### 3. Procedure

- 1 Request the teacher and/or student version of the course level Reflection Tool or the programme level Reflection Tool at [Website reflection tool requests](#). You can share this link with (other) teachers or students. Teachers will use the same link but no overriding of information takes place, they all can fill out the RT independently, and results are anonymous. It is not possible to trace which teacher gave which response. In the student version of the reflection tool, students have the option to share information on their background. An explanation is given to those who participate that characteristics, such as sexual orientation etc., may lead to responses to become traceable, but that making these characteristics known may also help to better understand problems at hand and to improve these if possible.
- 2 You are encouraged to complete all sections of the reflection tool (e.g., learning objectives, learning materials) as this will encourage reflection on all relevant aspects of your course. However, it is also possible to focus on one or more specific sections relevant to (the reflection process for) your course. This decision can be based on, for instance, comments students have made or aspects teachers struggle most with within the course. Note that: It is not possible to customize beforehand which sections of the reflection tool will be showed to (other) teachers or students, however: the course coordinator or teacher can give instructions about which sections of the reflection tool they would like to focus on: only the selected sections will then appear, other sections will be skipped automatically.
- 3 There are two options for filling out the reflection tool: individually or together with other members of the course's teacher team. We highly recommend this option, as experiences from other teachers show that filling out the reflection is most useful when it is used to start a discussion about the reflection tool. Either way, we would advise you to use both the teacher and the student version of the reflection tool if you are reflecting on a course. In this way, you can compare your own observations with those of your students, different perceptions could be used to start an interesting discussion.
- 4 Promoting and distributing the student version of the reflection tool. Ask your students to fill out the reflection tool, preferably after the course or somewhere at the end. If time allows it, ask students to fill out the reflection tool during a tutorial (see PowerPoint attached in same mail as this manual and link to reflection tool), otherwise, you can ask students via blackboard and/or email. You may want to consider organizing a meeting with students during which you discuss the outcomes and welcome their ideas or suggestions.
- 5 View the responses by accessing the report link provided in the same mail in which you found the link to the reflection tool. Only people who have received the link to results and the password can view the responses. Results consist of means and standard deviations per question and individual answers to open questions. You can download the report by clicking on the 'Download PDF' button on the left hand top side of the screen.

- 6 Schedule and prepare a meeting to discuss the responses of teachers. The goal of filling out the reflection tool is to start a conversation on diversity and inclusion in your course. A potential outcome of such a meeting could be that you as a team agree which are the three most relevant issues on inclusivity in your course that you would like to improve. You may need approximately 1.5 to 2 hours for such a meeting. More information on how to facilitate such a meeting can be found in Appendix 1.
- 7 Implement the most relevant issues and evaluate how their implementation went. For help on how to do this, you may: use the [Inclusive Teaching Toolbox](#) or ask Educational Consultancy and Training (O&T) for help ([onderwijsadviesentraining@uu.nl](mailto:onderwijsadviesentraining@uu.nl)).

For any questions about the Reflection Tool or the process surrounding it, please send an email to [inclusivecurriculum@uu.nl](mailto:inclusivecurriculum@uu.nl).

## Appendix 1. Possible structure for discussion outcomes reflection tools

Think about safety in the discussion on inclusion in your course and what best fits your teacher team. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) related issues can be very sensitive topics because they relate to individual's emotions and identities. Furthermore, opinions on the topic may vary strongly, so make sure to create a constructive atmosphere to discuss these issues.

Per section of the reflection tool (e.g., learning materials, assessment, etc.) show the section's responses and discuss:

- Were there any eye-openers based on these questions?
- Were there any discrepancies between students' and teachers' responses?
  - What would be the reason for this?
  - Do we need more information in order to better understand the students' responses?
- Are there any changes that we would like to make in order to make e.g., learning materials more inclusive?
  - If yes, how can this be improved?
  - If yes, do we have the knowledge and skills to do this? You may consult the [Inclusive Teaching Toolbox](#) or ask Education and Training (O&T) for help ([onderwijsadviesentraining@uu.nl](mailto:onderwijsadviesentraining@uu.nl)).

Summarize the discussion and note down which aspects you would like to take action.

Discuss who will work on this, when and when you will follow up on this .

Discuss if, how and when you will report about (the ongoing process of making) these changes to the students.