

# Decolonising What We Teach

## What do I need to consider?

Traditional academia frames the West as the sole producers of universal knowledge. What we teach and how we teach it plays a role in remedying this highly selective narrative. We recognise the importance of inclusive education in establishing equitable access for students from diverse social, cultural, educational, and economic backgrounds and that we need to take account of how knowledge is constructed within higher education learning environments.

## How could I introduce this into my teaching?

* **Address Eurocentric bias:** teaching content may focus on the perspectives and experiences of European or Western societies, while ignoring or marginalising the contributions and perspectives of non-European cultures and societies.
* **Contextualise the subject in its historical moment**: rather than removing content, make explicit the kinds of research programmes, assumptions and aspirations that generated it.
* **Be mindful of the language you use in your lectures:** language can reflect and reinforce colonial biases. Avoid using language that is colonial, racist, sexist, or otherwise discriminatory.
* **Evaluate the representation of various cultures and communities in your teaching content:**   
  Make sure that you are not perpetuating stereotypes or reinforcing harmful narratives about marginalized groups. This can be in the form of the images we use or the texts we reference.
* **Consider whose perspectives are included in your teaching content**:  
  Do you rely only on the perspectives of white male academics or do you include the perspectives of scholars from diverse backgrounds, including marginalised groups?
* **Consider the resources you use in your lectures, such as textbooks, articles, and videos**:

Are they written or produced by authors from diverse backgrounds? Do they challenge dominant narratives or perspectives? Could you provide students with a wider circle of contacts or experience within the course design through visits, engagement with people outside university or new kinds of material, this could include the use of COIL.

* **Listen to the student voice**: Talk to students about what kinds of content they would like to see addressed and build in space in the course to teach around topics identified by students in that year.

## Where can I find additional information and resources?

* [The UoA Decolonising the Curriculum website](https://www.abdn.ac.uk/about/strategy-and-governance/what-we-teach-2634.php)
* [The Language Matters Portfolio](https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2022-03/ARC%20Language%20Matters%20Portfolio%20March%2022.pdf) (The Anti-racist Curriculum project)