



# International Women's Day

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**Tuesday 8 March  
#BreakTheBias**



# Handbook for creating a gender-sensitive curriculum: Teaching and Learning Strategies



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# Background to the Handbook



**THE CENTRE FOR  
DIVERSITY POLICY  
RESEARCH AND  
PRACTICE**

**OXFORD CENTRE FOR STAFF  
AND LEARNING DEVELOPMENT**

OXFORD  
BROOKES  
UNIVERSITY

<https://gearingroles.eu/>

Grant Agreement n°824536.

# The call for contributions

1. Effective gender-sensitive practice
2. Diverse range of HE contexts
3. Practical guide
4. Rigorous approach



Contributions can take one of two forms, a **400-600 word case study or an example of teaching or training activities that illustrate how your inclusive teaching and learning practices promote gender sensitivity.**

# Four Sections

Gender-sensitive content

Gender-sensitive pedagogy

Gender-sensitive structures

...as well as the ecosystems in HE institutions



# The call for contributions

- SEDA network
- Professional network
- PFHEA network
- GEARING-Roles partner institutions
- Social media

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## Expression of Interest Inclusive Classroom: Gender Sensitive strategies handbook.

Please complete the Expression of Interest form by Monday 15 March 2021. OCSLD will contact you directly with your welcome pack outlining how you can contribute and the contributor's template. If you have any queries please email [ocsld@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:ocsld@brookes.ac.uk) with the subject line: Gearing-Roles Handbook.

# Welcome pack and information for authors



OXFORD  
BROOKES  
UNIVERSITY

**Gender-sensitive teaching-learning strategies  
and activities handbook.**

**Welcome Pack and Information for Authors  
2021**



# Template and a timeline

[View full document here](#)

## Contributor's details

### Guidance

- Please use Arial, font size 12, one and half line spacing for the main body of text.
- Contributions should conform to UK spelling throughout.
- Contributions can be submitted from individuals or teams.
- Please make a copy of this template if you plan to contribute multiple submissions. For all submissions please fully complete the template.
- The focus of the handbook is on activities that can be adapted into colleagues' practices situated in a diversity of settings and teaching or training platforms. We are keen to foreground practice, yet there will be an expectation that the strategy that you are describing has emerged from a theoretical background. Therefore the minimum expectation is that you will have at least two paper-reviewed references supporting your strategy/approach.
- All submissions will be subject to peer-review.
- The handbook will have a creative commons copyright (CC-BY-NC-SA) and will be housed on our OCSLD Webpages.
- If your contribution is published you will gain a citable contribution to a peer-reviewed book that is part of **Horizon 2020** the largest ever European funding programme for research and innovation.
- Any queries, please email [ocsld@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:ocsld@brookes.ac.uk).

## Case study/proposed activity

*(the word count for this section is between 400-600 words excluding references)*

Institution	
Subject/discipline e.g. engineering, social science.	
Undergraduate or Postgraduate Students and size of the cohort.	
Teaching setting e.g. online and/or classroom, hybrid, laboratory, studio, work placement, large and small group teaching, supervision of students.	
Can this strategy be adapted to a different teaching setting? If so, how?	
What did you do? Describe the case study/activity. Include all steps involved so the reader is able to replicate the activity within their own setting (please attach any relevant materials).	



# Outcome

Accept

Accept with minor changes

Resubmit for Review



Image:

<https://www.ecosia.org/images?q=Gearings%20role%20images#id=A4C78582810A992B9A4AEB883380D7DBBEA5B635>

# Contributions from...

- France
- India
- Singapore
- Finland
- England
- Wales
- Scotland
- Ireland
- Spain
- Canada
- Kazakhstan
- Denmark
- Portugal



Image:

<https://www.ecosia.org/images?q=World%20Map%20black#id=4EBBE1320D7D9FD58992394E8F3CD092FF62E816>

# Subject Areas

- Business and Management
- Law
- Languages
- Archaeology
- Gender studies
- Dance
- Drama
- Social Work
- Computer science
- Arts
- Geography (Initial Teacher Education)
- Drama
- Writing Studies
- Criminology
- Sport Sociology
- Professional Development
- Humanities and Social Science
- Marketing
- Learning and Teaching in HE
- Education
- Engineering (Electrical, Electronic, Control)
- Biology
- Biosciences
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Engineering Education
- Economics
- Arts – Media
- Research Integrity
- Gender Audit
- Linguistics
- Teaching and Research
- Education: Sociology
- Cross disciplinary

# Examples from the Handbook

## Section One:

*How can I teach gender as a topic?*

# Staging Gender in Drama Education - Arja Lehto, Anne Pässilä and Allan Owens, LUT University, Finland, and University of Chester, UK.



Drama Studio



Group size is variable



Postgraduate



Drama

Can be applied to different: **Cohorts** 

## What They Did

We worked on two levels: on one with students, and after this on a second level as three learners ourselves. We told a story and invited participants to step into it through a set of deceptively simple dramaturgical frames in order to collectively reflect on 'doing gender'.

The story is based on the ancient mythical practice of a grown-up child abandoning his own parent by carrying them to a remote desolate mountain place, known as *ubasute* 親捨て "abandoning a parent" or senicide in Japan. In this particular version, a son carries his mother up a mountain on his back. The reason is famine in the land, the Emperor has decreed that on their 60th birthday people must be carried away. During the journey, she stretches out her arms, catching the twigs and scattering them in their wake, so that her son will be able to find the way home.

After telling this story the leader speaks in the role of the mother: "I'm now sixty but I will not be thrown on the mountain". The next morning while all were asleep, she slipped out of the door and made her way to the town on the seashore to find work. In this way, she said to herself, she would not burden the family; she might even bring food to them.

As she walked down the long road, she stopped now and then exhausted in the day's heat as the sun rose. "I will find work," she thought, "Even though it will be hard, even though my son and daughter-in-law have abandoned me. I do not need much. I can help in any store, I have my skills in finance from when my husband was alive, my hands are skilled in weaving and creating, I am strong for my age and can even lift and carry and sweep if needed."

We focus on the scene when she arrived in the town and asks for work through this exercise in 5 steps:

1. Students get into pairs and face each other forming two parallel lines 3 meters apart. One person, A, is the mother, one person, B, is the shop trader. A walks to ask B for work, B responds, the conversation starts. Half the group (keeping in pairs) sit and watch the other half. Then this is reversed. The doing is embodied.
2. Whole group discussion. What did you notice about the way individuals chose to portray the mother? How was she represented in terms of gender, body, age, social class? (Acker, 1990)
3. Repeat step one in the same pairs but roles are reversed. i.e. if you played mother now play trader. Half the group watch the other half and then repeat the other way round.

# Staging Gender in Drama Education - Arja Lehto, Anne Pässilä and Allan Owens, LUT University, Finland, and University of Chester, UK.



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Postgraduate



Drama

Can be applied to different: **Cohorts** 

4. The walk home: improvise walking the 3 meters in slow motion. As above let half of the group observe the other half, then change round, repeat with role swap staged in the same way as in steps 1 and 3.
5. Whole group discussion about what has been observed about how gender has been performed (Butler, 1993) - how it has been 'done.'

## Why They Did it This Way

This kind of exercise renders gender construction observable and explorable in context. The gender issues are complex and taken for granted, at the same time visible, but not necessarily reflected on.

Our activity proposal enables drama educators to become aware of gender issues - gendered bodies and gendered ways of doing drama.

This involves getting a sense of our own gendered ways of being and teaching (Franks, 2015). In our practical example, the three of us authors also work together to develop this; Anne illustrates the process and Arja observes gender issues making notes as Allan leads the drama pretext session. (Ollif, 2001). Afterwards we talk, think and write together about what we have seen and experienced in this drama exercise. We use Mezirowian (1991) and Organizing Reflection approaches (Pässilä et al, 2015).

## How it Went

The group started to critically reflect on their own 'doing gender' (as well as age, class etc) and what they observed. We three teachers, as learners, collectively reflected on the participants' reflections, and so increased our own understanding of 'doing gender'.

## References

- Acker, J. (1990) Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organization, *Gender and Society*, 4 (4), 139-158.
- Butler, J. (1993) *Bodies that Matter. On the Discursive Limits of Sex*. Routledge. New York and London.
- Franks, A. (2015). What have we done with the bodies? Bodyliness in drama education research, *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 20:3, 312-315.
- Mezirow, J. (1991) *Transformative Dimension of Adult Learning*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Ollif, S. (2001) Differentiating for Gender in the Drama Classroom, *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance*, 6:2, 223-229.
- Pässilä, A., Oikarinen, T. and Harmaakorpi, V. (2015) Collective voicing as a reflexive practice, *Management Learning*, February 2015, vol. 46 no. 1 67-86.

## Section Two:

*How can I ensure my teaching approaches are gender-sensitive?*

# Creating Inclusive Culture From the Start of Your Module - Tab Betts, University of Sussex, UK.



Classroom and Online



Group of 150



Postgraduate



Education

Can be applied to different: **Teaching contexts**  **Cohorts**  **Disciplines**

## What They Did

Eight different activities to create an inclusive culture.

### 1. [Asynchronous community introductions](#)

I set up collaborative PowerPoint slides, which learners could edit in real-time by accessing a link. I created slides to introduce myself to learners and invited them to create 1-3 slides introducing themselves, indicating their preferred pronouns and anything which would help support the way that they think and learn.

### 2. [Inclusivity welcome video and statement](#)

I posted a welcome video and a note about our attitude to diversity on our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

### 3. [Teacher acknowledgement of influences on biases](#)

When introducing myself, I made a point of highlighting things which might contribute to my biases (such as being white, male, my age, where I grew up, having lived in China) and I emphasised my aim to celebrate all kinds of diversity. I stated that I would do my utmost to defend every individual's right to feel included and not be discriminated against.

### 4. [Explicit request for feedback \(with anonymous option\)](#)

I invited learners to suggest ways we could support them better and allowed them to provide feedback anonymously using Microsoft Forms.

### 5. [Shared responsibility for equality in discussions](#)

I also asked everyone to be mindful of ensuring that everyone can contribute to discussions and cited research on discussion patterns (for example menlearners dominating seminar discussions; international learners having different conversation turn-taking cues).

### 6. [Roles in group work](#)

I agreed and assigned roles for each learner during group work. To add an element of fun, we titled the roles as ministers (for example Minister of Note-Taking). One key role was Minister of Equality, who was there to ensure that all learners have an equal opportunity to participate, and that discussions/content produced represent a diversity of viewpoints.

### 7. [Circle of Voices](#)

During group work, we used Circle of Voices (each person has a fixed time to speak uninterrupted) to ensure that no one member dominates and everyone has the equal chance to contribute (Brookfield & Preskill, 2012; Gibbs et al., 2019).

### 8. [Regular one-to-one check-ins with students](#)



# Creating Inclusive Culture From the Start of Your Module - Tab Betts, University of Sussex, UK.



Classroom and Online



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Postgraduate



Education

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## Why They Did It This Way

Making pronouns, neurodiversity preferences, potential biases and attitudes explicit during a module makes learners feel safe to express themselves and establishes a culture of inclusion. Lecturers often assume that this is the norm, but many learners have negative experiences of not feeling included/supported/valued in educational contexts. These interventions go a small way to addressing this.

## How it Went

I had very positive feedback from students. One student who has synaesthesia opened up to tell the group about their experiences. They said they had never felt comfortable to do this before and it was because of the way that I had set up the classroom culture. I also received many positive comments, including:

- 'Tab is a fantastic teacher and I felt 100% listened to and respected... he was open to suggestions and very adaptable.'
- 'I thought Tab did an excellent job at engaging all of us, especially considering we were a very diverse group.'
- 'It's a great idea to check in with your students (I am making mental notes of all of your inclusive teaching practices for my own teaching beginning next week).'

## Suggestions For Use

Try using video or audio introductions using Flipgrid or Padlet. Talk openly about attitudes. Listen to your learners.

## References

- Alvermann, D. E., Commeyras, M., Young, J. P., Randall, S., & Hinson, D. (1997). Interrupting gendered discursive practices in classroom talk about texts: Easy to think about, difficult to do. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 29(1), 73-104.
- Brookfield, S. D., & Preskill, S. (2012). *Discussion as a way of teaching: Tools and techniques for democratic classrooms*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Crombie, G., Pyke, S. W., Silverthorn, N., Jones, A., & Piccinin, S. (2003). Students' perceptions of their classroom participation and instructor as a function of gender and context. *The journal of higher education*, 74(1), 51-76.
- Gibbs, J., Hartviksen, J., Lehtonen, A., & Spruce, E. (2019). Pedagogies of inclusion: a critical exploration of small-group teaching practice in higher education. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 1-1.
- Lewis, M. (1990). Interrupting patriarchy: Politics, resistance, and transformation in the feminist classroom. *Harvard educational review*, 60(4), 467-489.

## Section Three:

*How can I create support structures for students and staff that are gender-sensitive?*

## WinECO: Women in Economics

- Laura A. Harvey and Emiliya Lazarova, University of East Anglia, UK



Classroom and Online



Group of 40



Undergraduate



Economics

Can be applied to different: **Teaching contexts**  **Cohorts**  **Disciplines**

### What They Did

The inaugural event for 'WinECO: Woman in Economics' was a one-day event which brought together local secondary school girl students in years 10-12 with their teachers, invited guest speakers, staff and current students. The day included numerous activities and talks with the goal of challenging stereotypes in economics. We invited 3 speakers from different fields, including the Bank of England, Women's Budget Group and a Professor of Economics from the Royal Economic Society. Each speaker spoke about their personal journey and what their job entails. These guests also participated in a panel discussion along with University of East Anglia (UEA) Economics Alumni and current undergraduate students. Delegates participated in a taster session which involved learning about 'Diminishing returns to scale'. Over the lunch break there was a poster gallery and exhibition by other local employers and current postgraduate students showcasing their research. This allowed for informal discussion between delegates and invited speakers. Alongside this, teachers were invited to a Continued Professional Development (CPD) accredited event, which tackled misconceptions about gender gaps in academic performance of economics students at university, career prospects, and why we should try to increase diversity in economics. Using data and case studies, we clearly showed that women students perform just as well (if not better) as their men counterparts and that an economics degree opens opportunities for a much wider range of professional careers. The CPD session also provided additional training in student self-efficacy. Due to the importance of student confidence in aspiration raising, this was particularly aimed at women students.

Due to the Covid pandemic, we adapted the event for online delivery. This had the advantage that its reach was greater than Norfolk, however, it came at the cost of needing to shorten the event to limit 'zoom fatigue'. We reduced the number of invited speakers, in addition to opting for breakout rooms for small group discussion rather than it being a panel event.

### Why They Did It This Way

The field of economics suffers from a gender imbalance which is stark at undergraduate level. Only 33% of UG students in Economics are women, reasons cited for this disparity include incorrect stereotypes and misperceptions about the discipline (Crawford et al, 2018).

Teachers are integral to decision making at a secondary level (Alcott, 2017)), and so sessions are needed for them to challenge common misconceptions about the subject, notably that to pursue a degree in economics you must have studied A-level maths.

# WinECO: Women in Economics

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Therefore, it was important that an intervention also included the influencers, the impact here should extend beyond delegates who attended.

In addition, hosting an outreach event to increase the gender diversity in the discipline also signals to current students that the School of Economics at UEA is serious about supporting women students. They are also able to participate in the event themselves, thus affecting current student aspirations. Dee (2017) discusses the importance of role models on student performance, therefore suggesting that there will be a positive impact on current students.

## How it Went

Informal evaluation indicates that secondary school pupils and student delegates learned something about Economics and are now more aware of what Economists do compared to before the event. Moreover, favourite sessions were mostly offered by external speakers talking about their journey and job. These findings were echoed by teachers who attended.

## Suggestions For Use

To address potentially shy students not engaging in Q&A sessions, each delegate was given question sheets to be able to write down their questions and submit anonymously.

Online formats are growing in use and a common issue is engagement. We noticed that many delegates did not participate in breakout rooms when the event was online. We have decided in the next online edition to bring back the panel discussion and include 'informal discussion' at the end of the event.

## References

- Alcott, B. (2017). Does teacher encouragement influence students' educational progress? A propensity-score matching analysis. *Research in Higher Education*, 58(7), 773-804.
- Crawford, C., Davies, N. M., & Smith, S. (2018). Why do so few women study economics? Evidence from England. Institute for Fiscal Studies.
- Dee, T. S. (2007). Teachers and the gender gaps in student achievement. *Journal of Human resources*, 42(3), 528-554.

## Section Four:

*How can I create and support institutional approaches to embedding gender-sensitivity in the curriculum?*

## Integrating Bias Aware Teaching and Learning Practices (BATL) in A University's Lecturer Training Programme - Donna Hurford and Emma Hammarlund, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark



Online

Postgraduate and  
Assistant Lecturers

Cross Faculty

Can be applied to different: **Teaching contexts**  **Cohorts**  **Disciplines**

### What They Did

We included ways to support gender-sensitive teaching in the online module 'Students as Learners', mandatory for new HE teachers at the University of Southern Denmark (SDU) participating in SDU's Lecturer Training Programme (LTP). LTP participants start by posting their own teaching-based critical incident which exemplifies a teacher and student expectation gap to the module's blog. The critical incident is the first step in the module's four-step approach, an adaptation of Anne-Françoise Gilbert's Three Step Approach. Next the participants reflect on five short research and praxis informed videos on different factors which may influence students' learning. On SDU's website for university teachers 'Unlimited Thinking and Teaching', Emma, a geobiologist, shares through her Think Piece videos, how her roles as researcher, funding applicant and HE teacher led her to recognise the need for practical resources to address gender bias in her teaching. Inspired by Moss-Racusin et al.'s (2012) findings, where gender bias favoured applicants by men for science positions, Emma describes how her students found more mistakes in the same text when assigned a woman's rather than a man's name. This exercise heightened Emma's and her students' understanding of how bias, in this case gender bias, can affect us all and reasons for anonymous marking. You can find more practical suggestions for gender-sensitive teaching on Emma's LTP project poster on the 'Practical Tools' site (see below). Having reflected on the videos and links, including <http://unlimited.sdu.dk/> and Harvard's Implicit Awareness Tests, participants complete the next three steps: 2. Why is the situation problematic? 3. What is the preferable situation? And 4. What can be done? Having uploaded the completed template to the blog, participants provide and receive peer feedback. Finally, an academic developer provides feedback, including reference to relevant gender-sensitive and bias-aware Practical Tools.

### Why They Did It This Way

Research (Kahneman, 2014) and our SDU experience with the take-up of elective courses on BATL (Bias Aware Teaching and Learning) indicate that they tend to appeal to the already bias aware. By embedding BATL in the mandatory 'Students as Learners' course for 80 plus new teachers each year, we achieve an otherwise unlikely rate of exposure and impact. When providing feedback on all 'Students as Learners' participants' four-step approaches, there are a number of teachers who comment on the significance of bias in their critical incidents and how they would address it and mitigate its effects in a comparable situation. This collection of authentic bias aware reflections evidences the influence of BATL on their conceptions of factors influencing their teaching and their students' learning and what they have done or will do to mitigate bias and its effects. The inclusion of peer and academic developer feedback on each action plan provides additional opportunities to suggest how bias may have been present in a critical incident, and ways to address it.

## Integrating Bias Aware Teaching and Learning Practices (BATL) in A University's Lecturer Training Programme - Donna Hurford and Emma Hammarlund, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark



Online

Postgraduate and  
Assistant Lecturers

Cross Faculty

Can be applied to different: **Teaching contexts**  **Cohorts**  **Disciplines**

### How it Went

80 teachers per year are exposed to BATL resources. In agreement with the LTP participants, anonymised examples of bias in teaching and learning and ways to address them are shared at workshops and courses. Examples provided by HE teachers authenticate their relevance and help other teachers recognise similar situations. I shall update the 'Students as Learners' resources with references to cognitive biases and strategies for addressing them. At present, participants are expected to find them on <http://unlimited.sdu.dk/>. However if they are more readily accessible in the module, I suspect take up will be higher.

### Suggestions For Use

Look for ways to embed BATL into courses. Collect local examples of bias aware and bias affected practices which can be used to illustrate how to address bias. Develop an in-house online resource with practical suggestions for achieving BATL.

### References

- Eraut, M. (2004). Informal learning in the workplace. *Studies in Continuing Education* 26(2) 247-273.
- Kahneman, D. (2011). *Thinking Fast and Slow*. US: Farrar.
- Moss-Racusin CA, Dovidio JF, Brescoll VL, Graham MJ, & Handelsman J (2012) Science faculty's subtle gender biases favor menstudents. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.* 109(41) 16474-16479.
- Tripp, D. (1993). *Critical Incidents in Teaching: Developing Professional Judgment*. UK: Routledge.

## Professional Development and Networking Interventions to Promote Gender Equality in a Distributed University - Alexandra Walker, The University of the Highlands and Islands (UHI), UK



Classroom and Online



Staff



University Wide

Can be applied to different: **Teaching contexts**  **Cohorts**  **Disciplines**

### What They Did

I led and continue to lead strategic initiatives to provide spaces to discuss and influence gender equality and parity in further and higher education. This includes setting up a Women's Network and organising an annual International Women's Day event.

I set up a Women's Network in 2018, after the first university-wide event to mark International Women's Day highlighted that a women only network would provide the opportunity to discuss gender equality and parity beyond an annual event. It was also the intention that the Women's Network would offer what Leathwood (2004, p. 449) argues for in providing an important space away from men and men's defined and dominated practices, and a safe space to grow and learn away from the participants' oppressors.

I opened the network up to all colleagues who identify as women working in professional services, research, teaching, and leadership roles and at any stage in their career. I promoted the network through internal email lists and newsletters. The network started with 40 members which has risen to 71, with colleagues working in a range of roles represented. Depending on the topic being discussed, the number of participants at the meetings varies. It was intended that the network would offer a safe space to discuss common challenges, hear from inspirational women and lobby for change. In a university that is distributed across multiple sites in a large geographic region it was hoped the network would offer networking and professional development opportunities beyond the members' immediate context. While acknowledging the importance of the Women's Network as a closed and safe space, it is also important to recognise the limitations of having discussions around challenges and barriers within the group which are impacted and disadvantaged by these barriers. Therefore I sought pathways to raise awareness of key messages coming from the network and to continue these discussions in spaces where men are also present, recognising the importance of not presenting gender equality as 'a women's problem' to overcome. These spaces include a Women's Network group on the UHI internal social space 'Yammer' which is open to all, and it regularly sees men colleagues post news or opportunities for women colleagues. I use this space to summarise the network meetings and future topics. I am a member of the UHI Athena SWAN Self Assessment Team (SAT) where I feed in any key messages coming from the network, and I invited the Equalities and Diversity Advisor to run a survey and focus group with the network on the experiences of working at UHI, the outcomes of which form a part of the UHI Athena SWAN submission for 2021. The UHI International Women's Day event provides a further opportunity to highlight the Women's Network and this year I presented a session outlining the impacts of COVID-19 on women outside and within HE and the value of women's networks in a time of challenge and isolation.



# Reflections

- Time
- Administration support: 490 plus emails
- Critical friends
- Clear guidance for contributors and between stakeholders
- Publishing student
- Publish the handbook
- Publicity for the handbook
- Ensure the handbook is used to promote gender sensitivity.



Image:

<https://www.ecosia.org/images?q=Gearings%20role%20images#id=2AF08820B70D2DF04E23349DAAE98BEF850A46BC>

Thank you

@lecturerkitch

