

Check Against Inclusion and Diversity Standards

Open textbook users represent a wide array of populations, including:

- socio-economic classes
- geographies
- types of higher education institution
- ages
- socio-political affiliations
- cultural and ethnic background
- educational background and exposure.

Whether or not these users represent formally protected classes, it's your responsibility to [consider and include them in your content](#). Ensure your textbook meets inclusion and diversity standards by:

- ensuring proper representation of genders, races, cultures, geographies, ethnic backgrounds, disabilities, nationalities, ages, sexual orientations, socio-economic statuses and diverse viewpoints
- seeking to avoid causing offence, and ensuring every student can see themselves in your content
- monitoring changes in terminology
- gathering input from colleagues, students or community members from diverse backgrounds, advocacy groups and committees or departments at your university devoted to diversity and inclusion.

OpenStax has identified the following [areas and elements where diversity, equity and inclusivity are most relevant and visible](#) within open textbooks:

1. Illustrations and Graphics

- Have I included a range diverse subjects and people?
- Have I considered the background (literally), context, depicted actions of the subjects, expressions of authority, connotations, and so on?

2. Example names

- Have I include diverse names representing various national origins, ethnicities, genders, etc.?
- Have I avoided stereotypes associated with certain names or names that present in a certain way?

3. Key figures in the field

- Have I sourced diversity in key/historical figures mentioned?
- Have I avoided isolating diverse contributors to specific sections – i.e. 'multicultural impacts on psychology'?
- Where key/historical figures are not diverse, have I included current, more diverse researchers/figures for balance?

4. Application, examples and exercises/problems

- Have I written and used examples that include diverse people, organisations, geographies and situations?
- Have I created real-world practice problems and applications that pertain to situations and contexts inclusive of all populations?
- Have I avoided negative stereotypes or sensitive subjects in problems and applications, unless the subject matter demands it?
- Have I ensured exercises/problems don't require a specific knowledge or context that may be absent from certain individuals, or that may produce a negative connotation?

5. Appropriate terminology

- Have I ensured that all references to people, groups, populations, categories, conditions and disabilities use the appropriate verbiage and don't contain any derogatory, colloquial, inappropriate or otherwise incorrect language?
- Is there usage of outmoded terminology in historical situations? (e.g. court cases, laws, articles) should be clearly defined in quotations or annotated with contextual information.
- Have I attempted to use current terminology? – But note style guides may be in conflict if terms are controversial or not widely adopted. See [Write with Diversity and Inclusion in Mind](#) for a list of style guides containing inclusive and bias-free language guidelines.
- Have I avoided idioms or colloquialisms? – Particularly if they could lead to misconceptions among those who natively speak other languages or who may not have the educational or cultural context to understand them.

6. Keywords/indexed items

- Have I ensured that diverse topics and terms are represented in keywords/index?

7. Balanced issues and discussions

- Have I considered and included issues and situations that pertain to diverse populations? When discussing problems, conditions or issues, be sure to include those that affect an array of populations and groups.
- Have I ensured that I am aware of stigmatising victims or those having a specific condition, occupation, experience or background?
- Have I ensured that I am aware that certain controversial topics, when necessary to include, should be described in a balanced manner?

8. References

- Have I tried to ensure diversity in my references? This may be easier in some disciplines than others.
- When including less formal, in-text mentions of specific researchers or studies, have I tried to make these as diverse as possible?