

"Diversity is one of the most important prerequisites for dynamic and successful interaction. We see ourselves as an institution which allows students to combine the demands of study and family life. This is a place where all people can develop to their full potential, regardless of age, gender, personal life plan, ethnic background, religious affiliation and physical abilities."

Mission statement of Heilbronn University

Diversity-sensitive teaching

The heterogeneous student body at Heilbronn University offers the opportunity to utilise the different perspectives and competencies of students as potential and to incorporate them into teaching and learning situations. To this end, it is important to recognise individual biographies and consider their potential impact on teaching and learning: ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, gender and age-related differences, different language skills and learning styles, physical conditions, differing caring responsibilities and issues of student finance. A diversity-sensitive approach to teaching enables you to support all students equally and actively promote equal opportunities.

To the checklist for diversity-sensitive teaching

With the following checklist on diversity-sensitive teaching, the [Department for Equity and Diversity](#) would like to offer all lecturers at HHN a tool for preparing and self-assessing teaching and learning situations. Against the background of a diverse composition of all members of Heilbronn University, we would like to invite you to consciously and sensitively deal with diversity-related aspects of teaching and learning.

The checklist is structured according to six subject areas:

1. Course-related framework conditions
2. Verbal and non-verbal communication
3. Didactics and methodology
4. Performance assessment and evaluation
5. Counselling and support
6. Online teaching

Checklist for diversity-sensitive teaching

1. Course-related framework conditions

The framework conditions of my course enable the participation of all students (with child(ren), caring responsibilities, disability, chronic illness, ...).

- ☐ I provide students with barrier-free access to the learning spaces.
- ☐ Due to individual life situations and study contexts, I enable students to make flexible attendance arrangements (in consultation with the respective [Academic Counselling](#)).
- ☐ I make event-related content, slides, worksheets and scripts available online before and/or after the event. Missed content can thus be reworked and learnt at your own pace.
- ☐ Extraordinary dates (excursions etc.) will be discussed and agreed with the participating students.
- ☐ I take into account the needs of students with family commitments, for example, by communicating and adhering to time-related information (attendance and online appointments, deadlines, etc.) at an early stage.
- ☐ I ensure that all students have equal access to digital resources and offer support to promote digital skills where necessary.

2. Verbal and non-verbal communication

A conscious and sensitive approach to language makes it easy for everyone to follow my course and avoids stereotypes.

- ☐ During the event, I pay attention to clear pronunciation, appropriate speaking speed and volume.
- ☐ I make sure that presentations and notes can still be read and viewed in the last row (size, colour, contrast, ...).
- ☐ In verbal and written communication, I pay attention to gender-neutral formulations. I am familiar with the [guidelines for gender-sensitive communication](#) (*This page exists only in German*).
- ☐ I am aware of the need for "simple language", both written and spoken. I therefore use short sentences, explain foreign words and structure content in courses.
- ☐ I choose examples, literature and materials in such a way that stereotypical representations, prejudices and clichés are avoided.
- ☐ People of diverse ethnic and national affiliations, physical constitutions, genders and age groups as well as different educational biographies are equally represented in my visual language and depicted without context.
- ☐ I cultivate a culture of dialogue that is characterised by openness and respect.
- ☐ Students who form a minority of their student group, e.g. due to their gender, origin or skin colour, decide for themselves in my course whether they want to make this a topic.

3. Didactics & Methodology

The formulation of teaching objectives, course content and variety of methods are directly linked to dimensions of diversity by creating diverse learning and participation opportunities.

- ☐ I am aware that a variety of methods supports the equal participation of all students and can cater for different learning styles.
- ☐ I reflect on the methods I use to determine which competences they require and promote.
- ☐ I pay attention to student-centred teaching, which often makes use of collaborative forms of learning. This allows students to actively participate in the learning process and ask their questions.
- ☐ I encourage students to bring their own experiences into the learning process.
- ☐ In co-operative units, I pay attention to a balanced group composition and explicitly formulate requirements for equal cooperation and mutual support.
- ☐ I avoid a gender-stereotypical distribution of tasks (e.g. women as secretaries).
- ☐ I make sure that all students participate as equally as possible (e.g. speaking contributions).
- ☐ I present professional competence as independent of gender and origin (e.g. diversity-conscious use of quotations, use of first names, use of role models).
- ☐ The benefits of what has been learnt can be understood by everyone as early as possible. I illustrate teaching content with examples.
- ☐ As part of skills development, I encourage students to establish links between domain-specific specialist knowledge and their own living environment.
- ☐ I encourage students to reflect on their own professional perspectives and to adopt a critical attitude towards the subject being taught.
 - ☐ I try to strengthen diversity sensitivity in the teaching/learning process.
 - ☐ I pick up on diversity topics in a suitable place and thematise power relations (e.g. case studies, statistics, historical aspects)
 - ☐ For my part, students are given the opportunity to deal with diversity-related topics in their dissertations.

4. Performance assessment and evaluation

Course development can also take place against the background of diversity. The focus here is not only on reflecting on the examination modalities used, but also on incorporating the student perspective on learning success and course quality.

- ☐ Assessment criteria for examinations are communicated by me in good time and are therefore transparent.
- ☐ I am aware that a variety of examination formats does justice to the competences of different students. I reflect on my decision to use examination formats accordingly.
- ☐ I create conditions in examinations that are as inclusive and equal in opportunity as possible and, if necessary, point out possibilities for [students with disabilities](#).
- ☐ I am aware that in-process assessment methods during the course of the semester can increase students' reflection on the learning process and thus increase their self-responsibility.
- ☐ I repeatedly use evaluation methods during my course to obtain feedback on the students' learning success, the quality of the course and information on further course planning.
- ☐ I am open to feedback from students and take it seriously.
- ☐ I regularly reflect on my own behaviour as a teacher with regard to the aforementioned criteria for diversity-sensitive teaching.

5. Support and counselling

Counselling addresses the individual needs and requirements of students. Access that is as low-threshold as possible lowers the barriers to making use of these services.

- ☐ My contact options and office hours will be communicated within my course(s).
- ☐ At the beginning of the semester, I signal a willingness to talk and encourage students to make use of counselling and discussion services.
- ☐ I know the regulations on [compensation for disadvantages](#) for students with disabilities and [maternity protection](#). I am aware that impairments are not always recognisable from the outside. That is why I point this out in my courses as standard.
- ☐ I know and communicate [central advisory services](#) within the framework of my course that can be used in the event of special study situations.
- ☐ I offer flexible counselling formats that enable both face-to-face and digital conversations to meet the different needs of students

6. Online teaching

Diversity-related aspects (see subject areas 1-5) of teaching should also be considered as an integral part of digital teaching formats and are supplemented by the following points. The implementation of methodological diversity within the framework of digital tools is particularly challenging.

- ☐ I am aware of technical hurdles and problems. I am prepared to look for solutions together with my students.
- ☐ At the beginning of a new semester, I take the time to give my students an introduction to the possible applications of the software used.
- ☐ I ask all students to indicate the name to be used.
- ☐ I use both synchronous and asynchronous teaching formats to give students flexibility in terms of time.
- ☐ When switching to online teaching, I am aware that teaching and learning content requires a didactic reduction.
- ☐ In online teaching, I also pay attention to student-centred and activating methods and make full use of the possibilities offered by online tools.
- ☐ When designing online teaching units, I pay particular attention to the accessibility of the digital tools and materials used.
- ☐ I am familiar with HHN's online tools and use the internal [training programmes](#) (*This page exists only in German*) as well as the services offered by the [Center for eLearning and eAssessment](#) (*This page exists only in German*).