

## Inclusion Guide Resource Pack

### What's it all about?

University can be a fantastic time; there's loads of activities and sports to get involved with, hundreds of new people to meet, nights out, trips and union nights. For some people though, their time at Bath can be a missed opportunity- they can feel outcast from housemates and course mates and feel excluded when they try to participate in societies and sports.

It's not something we'd like to admit but many of us hold unconscious biases. No one would like to think they were racist, sexist, or discriminatory in any other way, but often our actions can promote exclusion.

### Who are we biased against?

In general, we tend to be biased against those that are different to ourselves. Everyone and anyone can face discrimination. At Bath, a number of diversity and support groups exist to help, support and engage those most likely to be discriminated against. In practise this list suggests those most likely to be discriminated against: women, disabled students, black or mixed ethnicity students, international, student parents, mature students, post graduates, students affiliated with religious groups and LGBT students. It should be reiterated that this list suggests those most likely to be discriminated against; it doesn't mean that everyone who belongs to this group is or feels discriminated against but it's something to bear in mind. The Equality Act 2010 essentially ensures that everyone is legally entitled to the equal treatment and opportunities.

It can be as simple as the way we communicate with different students when they turn up to our first meeting, right up to the types of activities we put on as a sports group/society. Every interaction we have with students is an opportunity for us to be biased, if we don't recognise these biases and treat people unfairly, they don't get involved with sports or societies and they become to feel alone, isolated and excluded from their own SU.

It can be tricky to override your unconscious biases, especially when you're not sure what they are. It's best to accept that we're all likely to be biased in some respects, and that this will affect our actions and decisions. **We shouldn't feel guilty, but we have to accept responsibility for monitoring our own actions to make Bath as inclusive as possible.**

We're all programmed to subconsciously categorise others, make prejudiced judgements and jump to conclusions. As long as we attempt to recognise when our actions and decisions are unjustly biased, we can prevent students feeling excluded and help to get every student more involved at Bath!

*Implicit association:* We have a tendency to believe that all people in a certain group are the same. It's an easy way to process information but we often don't realise we're doing this.

*Affinity bias:* We often automatically favour people who share similar experiences or behaviours to us.

*Self-fulfilling prophecy:* We often try to unconsciously confirm our hidden biases through our own actions and decisions.

## What can you do to help?

We've been and spoken to the Bath SU Diversity & Support Groups for the easiest way to help include all students. If there's anything you're not sure about the SU can always provide guidance as well as contacting the Diversity & Support chairs themselves for their input. We have some initial handy hints and then a more in depth look at how you can support students.

### Handy Hints to being inclusive committee members

- ✓ **Say Hello.** The easiest and best way to make people feel included? Start up a conversation with them! Students from minority groups may be particularly shy so take the first move and introduce them to others in your club.
- ✓ **Self-Monitor.** Challenge and reflect on your own behaviour all the time e.g. Did I greet everyone with the same enthusiasm at Freshers' Fair or did I look for people who look like myself/people involved in the club now?
- ✓ **Question Activities.** When organising an activity/sport trip try and think whether this is something that everyone can and will want to participate in.
- ✓ **Never Assume.** Try to challenge your own assumptions about what people are going to be like. Biases are completely natural but it's wrong to act on them.

<b>Minority Group</b>	<b>Actions to help inclusion</b>
LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Discrimination:</b> LGBT students may be worried about being discriminated against in activities; in particular sports or faith groups. This might prevent them coming along to an initial session or getting more heavily involved with the group. Many LGBT people have faced bullying in earlier years, which can affect the amount they might want to get involved with a group. It's important to be open and prevent discrimination, even if its jokes on the side it can have quite an impact on an LGBT person- try to be mindful of what you're saying and show leadership if other members of the group make inappropriate comment.</li> <li>• <b>Facilities:</b> Particularly for trans students changing facilities can pose a large barrier to participating in sporting activities. If in doubt contact the SU Advice and Representation Centre and/or the SU Sports Officer for the latest guidance.</li> <li>• <b>Lack of role models:</b> In the UK there continues to be a low percentage of positive LGBT role models, particularly in sports. You can't be expected to tackle this, but by showing support and acceptance of the LGBT community openly it can help encourage LGBT students to get involved. You could do this by explicitly mentioning that your society/activity is supportive of LGBT people in your opening meeting and/or you can wear the rainbow tags (available from the LGBT society) at freshers/refresh events and stands in solidarity and in support of the LGBT movement.</li> </ul>
Disabled (Physical, Mental health, learning difficulties and other conditions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Accessibility:</b> If your group needs money for equipment to make your activities more inclusive, budget for it! Societies and Sports Clubs can apply to their respective Special Request Funds; contact the SU Activities or Sports Officer for further information. Sometimes being inclusive of everyone is just not possible, for example if none of the suitable venues are accessible. You don't have to cancel; just make an effort to find a long-term solution and make sure your next activity is accessible to all.</li> <li>• <b>Disclosure &amp; Support:</b> Disabled students don't have to tell you about their condition but if they want to then that's great that they trust and want to be open with you! It can be very scary for someone to reveal a disability so try and</li> </ul>

	<p>reassure them, also try to be accommodating to their condition with the activities you organise. Also remember to keep their disability confidential- they might trust you with the issue or think that you need to know to help them participate but they might not want every member of the group knowing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Reasonable Adjustments:</b> It's a legal requirement to make reasonable adjustments to allow those with disabilities to participate fully in activities. Some common examples of reasonable adjustments are:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ selecting wheelchair-accessible venues and lecture rooms (if anything on campus is inaccessible you should contact estates on: <a href="mailto:estates-accessibility-issues@bath.ac.uk">estates-accessibility-issues@bath.ac.uk</a>);</li> <li>▪ if you're doing a presentation don't rely solely on visual aids, printing text on coloured backgrounds can make posters/leaflets/presentations much easier for dyslexic people to read;</li> <li>▪ if offering members food, ask for specific requirements but always try to offer a vegetarian/gluten free option.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Commitment:</b> There are many reasons why someone may need to leave any activity you're running and they may not wish to share it with you. Don't take it personally - they might just come back once they're feeling better.</li> <li>• <b>Spectrum Conditions:</b> Remember that some conditions are a spectrum, with symptoms that vary from person to person. Do not think to presume you know exactly what one person's needs are because you have a friend at home with the same condition – their condition could impact parts of their life more or less than you think you know.</li> <li>• <b>Odd vs Unacceptable behaviour:</b> Do not condemn anyone's behaviour simply because it's unusual. If someone's behaviour is disruptive, hurtful or dangerous, be critical on those grounds and not simply because it's unusual.</li> <li>• <b>Social Relationships:</b> Disabilities can sometimes cause difficult social situations. If in doubt, seek advice from the SU Advice &amp; Representation Centre and help resolving disputes from the University Mediation Service.</li> </ul>
BME (Black & Minority Ethnic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It's an uncomfortable truth to think that racism and prejudices still exist today but sadly it is the case. A lot of this can be unconscious bias, but by being consciously aware of our actions and the way in which we work we can challenge these unconscious assumptions and thoughts.</li> <li>• <b>Isolation:</b> BME students may feel isolated or uncomfortable being the only BME student in a particular group/activity. Here it is key to just be friendly and engage with everyone who attends your events/activities, in particular anyone who might look a bit isolated and who doesn't appear to know anyone, be they a BME student or not.</li> <li>• <b>Role Models:</b> Across the UK there a low number of BME role models, across business, sport and everyday activities. Bath as a city has a particularly low proportion of BME people and as such it's important to encourage BME members of your group to be visible, if you can, encourage them to run for committee positions and/or to help on activity fair stalls.</li> </ul>
Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lad Culture:</b> One of the main issues is the idea of 'lad culture'. This sort of attitude can be at sports club initiations and in general is heavily tied in with alcohol centred events. Examples include sexist and misogynistic jokes under the guise of 'banter' i.e. the idea that sexist comments are okay if you 'just meant it as a joke'. You have to directly tackle sexist language and/or jokes, and try to create events and initiations that are inclusive.</li> <li>• <b>Events:</b> Think before you decide on a fancy dress themes for evenings out, often</li> </ul>

	<p>themes are; a) gender divided and biased towards men and b) can make women feel degraded and/or sexualised, which can be uncomfortable and off-putting. Think about using universal themes rather than ones with an explicit gender divide. Not all girls are comfortable in/want to wear dresses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Language:</b> Call people out on misogynist language, this might seem petty or prudish but more broadly it can upset people and it can begin to change the unconscious beliefs within the group.</li> <li>• <b>Practise Slots:</b> Ensure that both men's and women's teams have equal access to equipment and practise slots.</li> <li>• <b>Visibility:</b> Make women in your society visible, if you can, encourage them to run for committee positions or to help on activity fair stalls.</li> </ul>
Postgraduates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Challenging the stereotype:</b> Postgraduates are not a different species that hate fun and look down on undergraduates (well, some are but most aren't!). Like undergraduates, some are sporty, some are nerdy, some love to party, some don't and so on. Always approach and engage with anyone who wants to join your group and try not to assume they won't want to be involved in your socials or events.</li> <li>• <b>Commitment:</b> Postgraduate courses tend to be more intense than undergraduate ones, so postgraduate students tend to have less free time than undergraduates. Don't be offended if a postgraduate doesn't participate but always remind them they are welcome.</li> <li>• <b>Location:</b> Postgraduates are more likely to live outside Bath than undergraduates; bear this in mind when scheduling events and don't be offended if it seems like postgraduates are less willing to be flexible with the time of events/meetings.</li> <li>• <b>Mixing UG and PG:</b> Postgraduate research (PGR) students do not have many lectures and spend most of their time researching; many actually help with the teaching of undergraduates. Therefore, some may not get involved with all of your socials as they might feel uncomfortable mixing with people they also teach. Consider running postgraduate only events in addition to your other events.</li> <li>• <b>Summer activities:</b> Many postgraduate students stay over the summer. If your group has large numbers of postgraduate students consider putting on events purely for people who are still here; for example, the Archery club are good at this. For groups with fewer postgraduates this is obviously not feasible.</li> </ul>
Mature students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Feeling isolated:</b> If you are an undergraduate mature student, it is easy to feel isolated, especially if you are on a course where you are the only mature student and you don't have time to meet other people. For some mature students this can be very demoralising and make them feel isolated. Furthermore, for those that are the only mature student on their course, there can be doubt as to whether they are 'the token older one'. A welcoming group can be very reassuring.</li> <li>• <b>Feeling patronised or insignificant:</b> Often mature students are banded in with everyone else, with (unintentionally biased) comments during lectures such as "before you were born", or "you won't remember this". This isn't offensive as such, but further demonstrates how it's the 'majority' that are focused on. As one student commented: "you quite rightly wouldn't mention skin colour to categorise students in a lecture, why mention age?" Try not to make people feel insignificant.</li> <li>• <b>Different interests:</b> Some students (and not just the mature ones) may not</li> </ul>

	<p>want to go to clubs or events that involve drinking and associated behaviour, so try to cater for other interests where possible. Undergraduate Fresher's Week events, such as club nights every night, are aimed at younger people who want to drink and party. Although this is completely understandable, and you need to appeal to the masses, try to think about those that might want something different (and that isn't just mature students!).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Don't exclude/ignore:</b> Some mature students don't get time to participate in clubs or societies, but for others they feel too old to join, particularly as their first encounter with clubs will be during Fresher's Week fairs. This is where they often get puzzled looks or are simply ignored. If someone shows an interest in your club or society, but they look older so you're not sure if they're a student – just ask! If they happen to be a visitor or a member of staff, and seem a bit offended, you can simply reply with something polite like “we have many diverse students at Bath, so we don't like to assume someone is or isn't a student, and all students are welcome in our club/society”.</li> <li>• <b>We're not that different:</b> We're all here for the same reason – to achieve in Higher Education. Although some students might be older than the norm, we will all experience similar pressures, worries, highs and lows during our chosen course. Having varied interests, coming from a different background, or being older, shouldn't stop any person from being welcomed into a group. Being able to feel included within the whole university is important for everyone, not just the majority.</li> </ul> <p><i>Many of the points in the part-time students and student parents section may apply to mature students.</i></p>
Part-time students and student parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>PT students and student parents have been combined as much of the advice is very similar- in practise everyone's situations are unique so try to be approachable and maintain an open/flexible attitude.</i></li> <li>• <b>Commitment &amp; Flexibility:</b> Often these students have commitments alongside their studies. Try to be conscious of this by arranging events/activities at a variety of times across different days so they can attend a proportion of events. For smaller societies try to survey the best times for all people; you can't please everyone all the time but flexibility will allow you to attract a larger, more diverse attendee set.</li> <li>• <b>Cost:</b> All students are likely to face some form of financial pressures from time to time but try to create events suitable for those on restricted budgets, as well as more expensive, large-scale trips.</li> </ul> <p><i>Many points in the above mature students section may apply to part-time students and student parents.</i></p>
Students of faith or belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Facilities:</b> Some faiths can impact the way in which students choose to live their lives and as such they may require private changing, prayer facilities, specific dietary requirements and/or adherence to a specific dress code. Make sure you let your members know you're happy to work with them to support them to take part in a way that complies with their faith- if in doubt the SU Advice and Representation centre can provide support.</li> <li>• <b>Time Constraints:</b> Religious commitments can impact the amount of free time available to students of faith to participate in activities. Try to be mindful of key religious festivals when planning any events/activities.</li> </ul>
International students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Language Barriers:</b> The most obvious barrier for international students is the potential of language barriers. Try to show patience with those who are working on their English- it's one thing learning a language abroad but local slang and</li> </ul>

	<p>non-formal words aren't necessarily taught abroad. If you can see someone is struggling try to talk to them one on one so you can develop a more fluid conversation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Cultural Norms:</b> Another barrier to participation is cultural norms. The concept of a student's union with societies and activities may be entirely alien to students from other cultures. Also common events here, e.g. fancy dress events, may be completely new. Try to engage with international students when you see them at Fresher's fair and explain from the beginning what your society is about, when you meet and what you do when you meet.</li> </ul>
<p>Students who don't drink alcohol</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Events:</b> As with much of the advice for other groups, try to vary the events that you run across a range of times and prices. In particular, try to publicise non-alcohol events as much as alcohol featuring events. Also, consider how you can make alcoholic events more accessible for those who don't drink alcohol. Clubbing can be fun for those who do and don't drink alcohol- you could encourage non-drinkers to participate by having a designated non-drinker attending events and publicise this to normalise non-drinkers attending the event.</li> </ul>

Operating an inclusive society or sports club means you'll have more members and (hopefully) a more active, interesting society! Also, you'd be surprised at the impact your show of inclusivity can make to getting minority students more involved and engaged with your club, as well as the impact it has on them.

### Acknowledgements:

In producing this Inclusion Guide, the University of Bath Students' Union Diversity & Support Exec gratefully acknowledges the help and contributions of the following:

- **Enable** - for any student with a disability or medical condition which affects your physical or mental health, or a learning support need;
- **Erasmus and Exchange** - to provide support and help to students visiting Bath from abroad;
- **Gender Equality** - to discuss and represent gender equality issues;
- **Global Group** - to promote the integration of International students and Home students;
- **LGBT** - for all Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Trans students;
- **International Student Association** - all international students at the University of Bath;
- **Mature Students** - for any student who is over the age of 21 when they begin their studies at the University of Bath;
- **Race Equality** - to discuss and represent race equality issues;
- **Student Parents** - for any student parent or students with caring responsibilities;

You can find further details about these groups at: <http://www.bathstudent.com/advice/student-groups/>

- **The Postgraduate Association** – representing over 4000 postgraduates, for full information please visit <http://www.bathstudent.com/pgs/>;
- **The International Students Association** – representing the views of international students, for full information please visit <http://www.bathstudent.com/isa/>;

Finally, all members and representatives of the University of Bath Student' Union Diversity & Support Exec Committee, who have contributed to and produced this Guide.