

Decolonising DMU Toolkit

**Decolonising DMU in
Transnational Education (TNE)
settings: DMU Dubai Campus**

Decolonising DMU and TNE

What is TNE?

The DMU definition of Transnational Education (TNE) is based on the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education: <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code>

TNE is collaborative provision that involves: *learning opportunities leading or contributing to the award of academic credit or a qualification that are delivered, assessed or supported through an arrangement with one or more organisations other than the degree-awarding body.*

DMU defines its TNE activity in the UAE with a physical presence in Dubai and an international branch campus. In this type of TNE the British University is 100% responsible for ensuring academic quality and teaching is delivered locally by academic staff appointed by the University not via “flying-faculty”.

Why is Decolonising DMU important to TNE?

Decolonising DMU is a strategic priority relevant to learning and teaching activities taking place at the University in the UK but even more relevant to learning and teaching activities taking place in TNE settings such as DMU Dubai. The Decolonising DMU Toolkit is at its root about making what we teach and how we teach more responsive to the problems of colonial and racialised privilege and discrimination within our teaching practice. Clearly, by virtue of its location (Middle East) and its student and staff population (100% international), the Dubai campus may seek to engage more with the

“decolonisation” concept in order to ensure teaching and learning at the Dubai campus is contextualised and made relevant to the needs of students at the Dubai campus. This Decolonising DMU Toolkit is therefore intended to act as a briefing for academic staff at the Dubai campus, on what “decolonising” learning and teaching might entail. This briefing is not prescriptive but rather, offers questions and ideas for academic colleagues to consider within a critical discourse of the value of internationalisation in higher education, and DMU’s work on the BAME attainment gap in the UK and its commitment to inclusive pedagogy. The aim is to stimulate reflection and changes in teaching practice that reflect DMU values of dignity and respect for equality, cultural diversity and inclusion.

Decolonising Curricula and Pedagogies

By “curriculum” we mean the content of programmes and modules, and by “pedagogy” we mean the methods used for teaching, assessment and providing students with academic support. Central to all the work on both curriculum and pedagogies it is accepted that programme and module leaders are knowledgeable about their areas of teaching and therefore, best placed to make recommendations to assess how decolonising practices may be developed and embedded in their teaching.

Diversity and TNE

The DMU Dubai campus is located in a country where cultural diversity is highly valued and respected in the classroom. Given the increasing diversity of resources now available for learning and teaching it is possible and indeed, necessary for teaching staff to diversify perspectives on a range of areas whilst adhering to curriculum frameworks documented in programme and module handbooks. This is also an opportunity for international academic staff to inform their teaching with references from their own educational backgrounds and other resources that are not exclusively Western, or Eurocentric.

Questions for academic staff to actively engage with Diversity

1. To what extent does my programme or module allow my students to understand the origins and purpose of this field of study in its historical context? Could such an understanding be included in introductory material?
2. To what extent does my programme or module allow for or encourage diverse entry points around a particular subject?
3. Does the programme or module allow for a critical approach to received/authoritative texts as a central feature of study?
4. What is the demographic profile of authors on the programme reading list? What is the effect of this on student engagement? What effect may this have on the diversity of views with which the students are presented?
5. Does my programme or module presume a particular profile or mindset of student and their orientation to the world? Are there ways of thinking about the material or subject from different perspectives?

How should the resource be used and by whom?

This resource should be used by academic staff who have a role in teaching DMU Dubai students.

Decolonising the reading list: working towards an anti-racist university workshop

What do we mean by decolonising the reading list? Why is this necessary and what steps can we take to effect change? This workshop is delivered by the University's Decolonising DMU team and provides a safe space to discuss these questions and offers practical, co-creative tools to kick-start reading list analysis and enable discussions around why lists look as they do. Followed by suggestions of how to broaden potential sources contained within reading lists, this workshop can contribute to the formation of re-imagined decolonising reading lists that better reflect our academic community at the DMU Dubai campus and contribute to building an anti-racist pedagogy.

All DMU Dubai academic staff are encouraged to attend this workshop.

Kaye Towlson from the Decolonising DMU team will be delivering this workshop in Jan 2022 – tbc.