DECOLONISING THE DIGITAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT:
TIPS FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Decolonisation requires institutions to acknowledge the historical injustices, power imbalances, and Eurocentric perspectives that have dominated the field of education. Such efforts require institutions to recognise and address the impact of colonisation in digital learning environments.

Decolonising digital environments involves identifying and challenging the biases that underpin digital platforms, as well as exploring ways to make them more inclusive and accessible to diverse groups. It requires institutions to explore how digital technologies reproduce and represent the ideas and values of the dominant white anglophone majority, through coding, language, icons, images and navigation structures.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Use clear, precise, and accessible language in digital environments, digital resources, and lecture recordings. Be mindful of academic jargon, colloquial language, and cultural context of metaphors. Explain key terminologies, specialised vocabulary, and assessment terms instead of assuming your learners already know these.

AMPLIFY NON-WESTERN VOICES

Ensure representation of diverse communities in learning materials, videos, images and icons. Ensure a variety of learning resources (e.g., digital articles, podcasts, videos, blogs) and diverse perspectives within resource lists, by promoting authors from the Global South or incorporating case studies from a variety of regions and countries. If all essential texts are androcentric and produced in Europe or North America, discuss this with the learners and explain the rationale behind their inclusion.

CHALLENGE ASSESSMENT METHODS

Utilise formative and summative assessment activities such as collaborative group work and multimodal assessments to allow different communication styles and cultural practices to be promoted. Provide background for new concepts using artefacts such as images, articles, and videos, which can be explored independently.

PROMOTE PERSONALISATION

Ensure digital content is accessible to learners by providing multiple ways of accessing materials and ensuring compatibility with assistive technologies. This supports efforts to promote personalisation within digital environments. For instance, tools such as Blackboard Ally can provide real-time translation of content into different languages.

SUPPORT DIGITAL BELONGING

Take care when pronouncing unfamiliar names as mispronouncing a name can undermine a student's identity. Digital tools like #MyNameIs can help staff and students share their names via phonetic translation. Within virtual classrooms, it is recommended that students are offered a choice whether to turn on their video or use virtual background filters. Students may not want their image captured for privacy reasons or may be experiencing bandwidth issues.

COLLABORATE WITH STUDENTS

Learners often value opportunities to share their backgrounds and perspectives, therefore designing collaborative digital activities and assessments that encourage peer working and support. Design opportunities to promote unique voices through cooperative and active learning activities that prioritise collaboration. Create digital spaces for learners to share personal experiences to support inclusivity and learner motivation.

To continue this conversation further and discuss ways you could support the decolonisation of your digital learning environments, please email CELT's Digitally Enabled Education (DEE) team on **digedsupport@southwales.ac.uk** or visit the DEE web pages at **celt.southwales.ac.uk/dee/**