

# Cultural Awareness, Diversity, and Inclusion



Peer-Olaf Siebers (Senior Tutor) 02/2025

Content on 'Cultural Awareness' inspired by "Cultural Awareness" slides by Steve Rooney, Zoe Enstone, and Marta Ulanicka (Leicester University)

Content on 'Diversity and Inclusion' inspired by "Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education" slides by Deirdre Cobb-Roberts and Michelle McNulty (University of South Florida)

Language Quiz and 'Understanding the Brits' contributed by Rachel Jessops (University of Nottingham)

# Culture

- Culture is "all those things that people have learned to do, believe, value, and enjoy in their history ... the ideals, beliefs, skills, tools, customs, and institutions into which each member of society is born" (Sue 1981)
- There is your own culture and the culture of others
  - Cultural Assumptions: We often take our own cultural norms for granted, assuming they are universal, while other cultures may have entirely different perspectives and practices
  - Mutual Influence: Cultures do not exist in isolation; they interact, adapt, and influence each other, leading to both enrichment and potential misunderstandings

Sue D (1981) "Counseling the Culturally Different: Theory and Practice". New York: Wiley

# What is Cultural Awareness?

- Why is it important?
  - Culture influences food, dress, opinions, identity, music, social interactions, and language
  - Understanding cultural backgrounds fosters cross-cultural understanding and acceptance
  - Helps us see our own culture from an outsider's perspective
- Key Focus:
  - Visible differences: food, clothing, etc.
  - Invisible differences: values, work ethic, etc.

# Examples of Cultural Differences

- Time Perception
  - Mediterranean/Latin America: Arriving 30 minutes late is normal
  - Northern Europe: Arriving late is rude
- Gestures
  - England: 'O' with fingers means "Ok"
  - France: The same gesture means "Nothing" or "Worthless"
  - India: Shaking head side to side means "Yes"
- Laughter
  - Most countries: Sign of happiness
  - Japan: Sign of confusion or embarrassment

# How to Be Culturally Aware

- Ask questions about other cultures
- Be open-minded: Your way isn't the only way
- Learn from others and share your culture
  
- Simplify language when communicating
  - Speak slowly, stress important words, and repeat if needed
  
- Use non-verbal communication
  - Body language, gestures, and facial expressions are key

# What is Culture Shock?

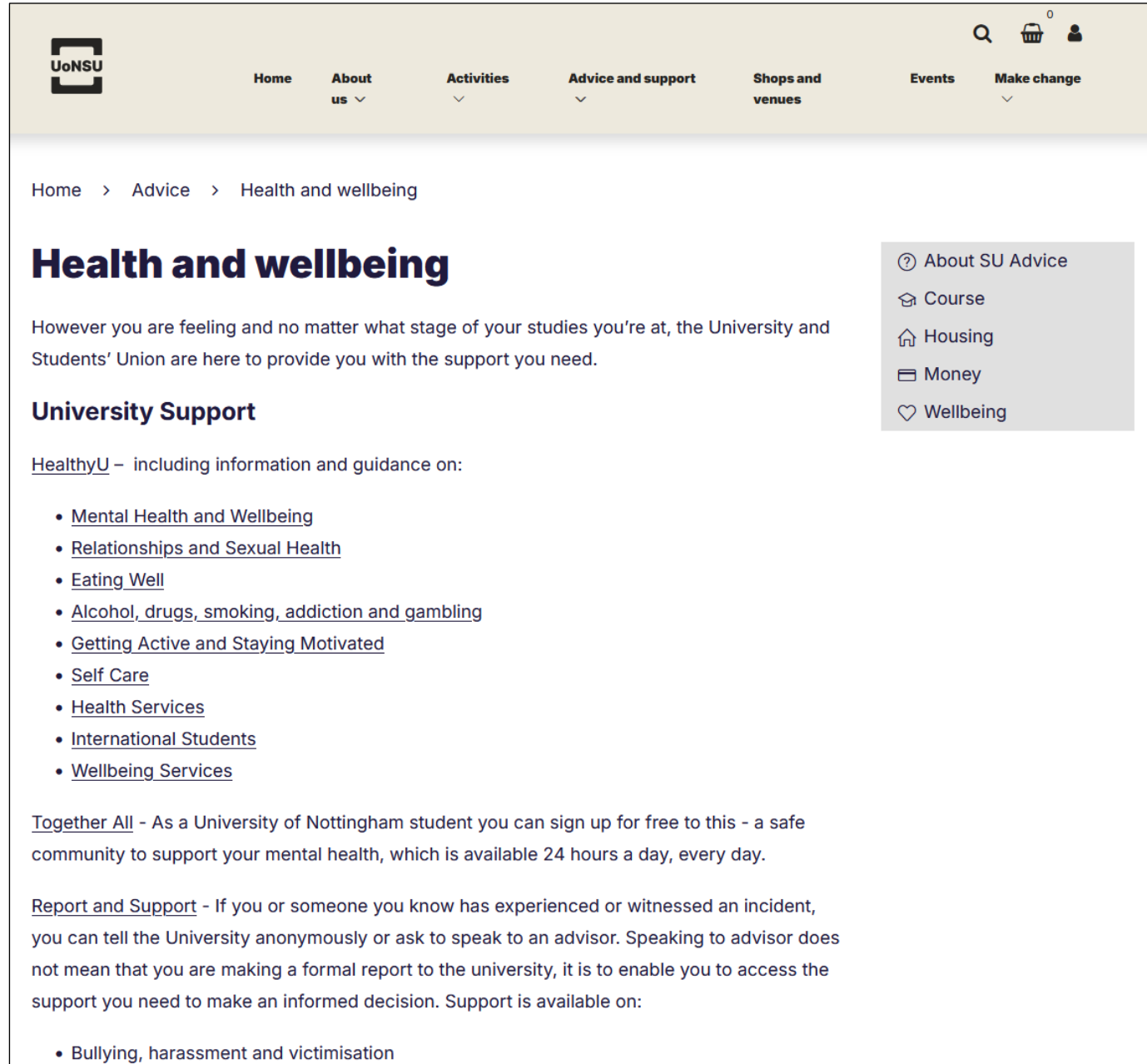
- Definition
  - Disorientation when exposed to an unfamiliar culture
- Stages
  1. Honeymoon Stage: Fascinated by the new culture
  2. Disintegration Stage: Feels anxious, withdraws, and criticizes the culture
  3. Re-integration Stage: Begins to adapt but may still reject differences
  4. Independence Stage: Enjoys the culture and adopts new behaviours
  5. Autonomy Stage: Fully comfortable and understands the culture
- Symptoms
  - Homesickness; withdrawal; boredom; irritability; excessive sleeping; irrational anger ...

# How to Help Someone with Culture Shock

- Encourage them to get involved in university life
- Encourage them to seek support and reassurance
- Invite them to activities and encourage open conversations
- If severe, direct them to the Student Welfare Service or a coordinator

# Professional Help

<https://su.nottingham.ac.uk/advice/health-and-wellbeing>



The screenshot shows the UoNSU website header with navigation links: Home, About us, Activities, Advice and support, Shops and venues, Events, and Make change. The breadcrumb trail is Home > Advice > Health and wellbeing. The main heading is "Health and wellbeing". Below it, a paragraph states: "However you are feeling and no matter what stage of your studies you're at, the University and Students' Union are here to provide you with the support you need." A sidebar on the right contains a menu with items: About SU Advice, Course, Housing, Money, and Wellbeing. The "University Support" section includes a heading "HealthyU – including information and guidance on:" followed by a bulleted list of links: Mental Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Sexual Health, Eating Well, Alcohol, drugs, smoking, addiction and gambling, Getting Active and Staying Motivated, Self Care, Health Services, International Students, and Wellbeing Services. The "Together All" section states: "As a University of Nottingham student you can sign up for free to this - a safe community to support your mental health, which is available 24 hours a day, every day." The "Report and Support" section states: "If you or someone you know has experienced or witnessed an incident, you can tell the University anonymously or ask to speak to an advisor. Speaking to advisor does not mean that you are making a formal report to the university, it is to enable you to access the support you need to make an informed decision. Support is available on:" followed by a bulleted list: Bullying, harassment and victimisation.

UoNSU

Home About us Activities Advice and support Shops and venues Events Make change

Home > Advice > Health and wellbeing

## Health and wellbeing

However you are feeling and no matter what stage of your studies you're at, the University and Students' Union are here to provide you with the support you need.

### University Support

HealthyU – including information and guidance on:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Relationships and Sexual Health
- Eating Well
- Alcohol, drugs, smoking, addiction and gambling
- Getting Active and Staying Motivated
- Self Care
- Health Services
- International Students
- Wellbeing Services

Together All - As a University of Nottingham student you can sign up for free to this - a safe community to support your mental health, which is available 24 hours a day, every day.

Report and Support - If you or someone you know has experienced or witnessed an incident, you can tell the University anonymously or ask to speak to an advisor. Speaking to advisor does not mean that you are making a formal report to the university, it is to enable you to access the support you need to make an informed decision. Support is available on:

- Bullying, harassment and victimisation

About SU Advice  
Course  
Housing  
Money  
Wellbeing



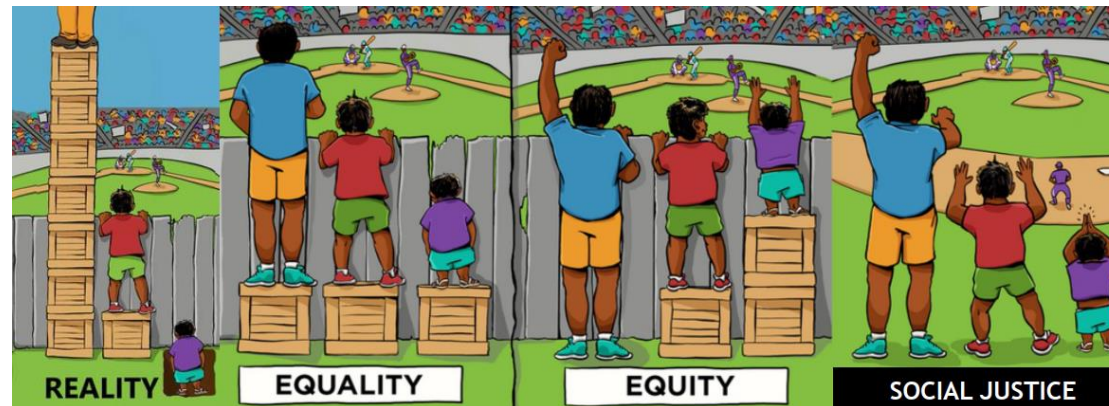
# What are Diversity and Inclusion?

- **Diversity** is simply a representation of many different types of people
  - Diversity includes differences in racial and ethnic background, socioeconomic status, geographic location, academic/professional background, opinions, religious beliefs, political beliefs, sexual orientations, heritage, and life experiences
  - Diversity often focuses on the differences and is referred to as "the mix"
- **Inclusion** is the deliberate act of welcoming diversity and creating an environment where all different kinds of people can thrive and succeed
  - Inclusion is the act of "making the mix work"

Everyone should feel **safe and encouraged to fully participate** and be on equal and equitable footing as everyone else!

# Equality vs. Equity vs. Social Justice

- **Equality** means providing the same resources, policies, and practices, regardless of difference
- **Equity** means providing resources, policies, and practices based on varying needs
- **Social Justice** is a process of providing resources, policies, and practices based on varying needs and working towards eliminating the causes of the disparities



# Kindness on Campus

For more information on this UoN initiative speak to Laura Walker from the "HealthyU" Team  
([laura.walker@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:laura.walker@nottingham.ac.uk))



From the book 'The Boy, The Mole, The Fox and The Horse' by Charles Mackesy

# Language Quiz

- What do these Idioms and Phrases mean?

Idiom	Meaning
Cheap as chips	
Butterflies in my stomach	
Finding a needle in a haystack	
Fish out of water	
Get something off your chest	
Give it a whirl	
In the fast lane	
Making a mountain out of a molehill	
Bob's your uncle!	
A piece of cake	

Phrasal Verb	Meaning
Cut it out!	
Bring it on!	
Fill me in	
Get back to it	
Hang on	
Keep going	
Look out!	
Turn up	
Work it out	

# Language Quiz

Idiom	Meaning
Cheap as chips	Very inexpensive
Butterflies in my stomach	Feeling nervous or excited
Finding a needle in a haystack	Extremely difficult to find
Fish out of water	Feeling out of place
Get something off your chest	Talk about a problem or worry
Give it a whirl	Try something new
In the fast lane	Living a busy or exciting life
Making a mountain out of a molehill	Overreacting to a small issue
Bob's your uncle!	It's done, simple as that!
A piece of cake	Very easy to do

Phrasal Verb	Meaning
Cut it out!	Stop doing that!
Bring it on!	I'm ready for the challenge!
Fill me in	Give me the details
Get back to it	Resume what you were doing
Hang on	Wait a moment
Keep going	Continue, don't stop
Look out!	Be careful!
Turn up	Arrive or appear
Work it out	Solve the problem

# Further Language Quirks

- Some Local Slang

- "Duck" is a common term of endearment used in the East Midlands, like "love", "dear", or "mate". People might say, "Alright, me duck?" meaning "How are you, love?" or "How are you, mate?". It originates from the Old English word ducas, meaning leader, and evolved into a friendly way to address someone.
- "Tada" (or "Ta-ra") is an informal way of saying goodbye, like "see you later." It's commonly used across the Midlands and the North of England.

- Greetings in Britain

- In British English, it is common for people to greet each other with "How are you?":
  - Person A: "How are you?" (meaning "Are you alright?")
  - Person B: "How are you?" (meaning "Yeah, and you?")
  - Person A: "" (meaning "All good!")

# Language Quiz

- How many different meanings can the sentence "**I didn't say to her you were stupid**" have if you stress different words?
  - Example: I didn't say to **her** you were stupid (but I said it to someone else)

Mike Cook, Professional Development, The University of Nottingham

# Language Quiz

- How many different meanings can the sentence "**I didn't say to her you were stupid**" have if you stress different words?

- I didn't say to her you were **stupid** (I said other stuff about you)
- I didn't say to her you **were** stupid (you still are stupid)
- I didn't say to her **you** were stupid (I said someone else was)
- I didn't say to **her** you were stupid (but I said it to someone else)
- I didn't **say** to her you were stupid (perhaps you sent an email)
- I **didn't** say to her you were stupid (emphasis)
- I didn't say to her you were stupid (someone else did)

Mike Cook, Professional Development, The University of Nottingham



# Some Fun: Understanding the Brits

What the British say	What the British mean
With all due respect ...	I think you are wrong.
Perhaps you would think about ... I would suggest ...	This is an order. Do it or be prepared to justify yourself.
Oh, by the way ...	The following criticism of the purpose of the discussion is ...
I was a bit disappointed that ...	I am very upset and angry that ...
Very interesting ...	I don't like it.
Could you consider some other options?	Your idea is not a good one.
Please think about that some more.	It's a bad idea. Don't do it.
I'm sure it's my fault.	It's not my fault.
That is an original point of view.	Your idea is stupid.

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/we-all-speak-english-dont-nannette-ripmeester/>