SAGE UK Books:

Statement of intent regarding diversity, equity, inclusion and decolonising the curriculum

At SAGE, we want our books to empower people from all backgrounds to learn from and contribute to scholarship. We are working to ensure our publishing is inclusive and we have committed to embedding a sophisticated understanding of diversity, inclusivity, and accessibility in our books. Our goal is for our texts to be free from bias and prejudice and to reflect the diversity of students reading them.

This statement is a work in progress, indicating the type of organisation we want to be, and it will evolve as we continue to learn. We will be open, honest and clear when we fall short, and invite feedback at info@sagepub.com.

What do we want our books programme to look like?

For us, diversity encompasses overlapping identities, both visible and non-visible, and we consider it in all its forms, including race, ethnicity, religion, indigeneity, culture, nationality, neurodiversity, (dis)ability, sex, gender, sexuality, age, and class. Our goal is to represent all readers in our books as well as a wide range of examples and perspectives, which enriches the learning experience for everyone.

In parallel, we want to support movements to decolonise teaching and learning through our publishing. Acknowledging that decolonisation is complex, we will continue to learn from educators and activists working to decolonise curricula across higher education. Part of our books programme will focus on providing students with tools to critically assess and question Eurocentric and imperialist discourses, and their associated canons and research methods. We will also encourage theoretical pluralism, including approaches that have been marginalised in academia and beyond.

Our books cover a variety of subjects taught in different ways, so our approach will vary across disciplines.

- We want to attract, sign, and nurture authors who share our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.
- We will encourage ideas from and support authors of colour, as well as authors who are women, disabled, working class and/or LGBTQIA+. We will create a culture where authors of all backgrounds know we want to publish and support the development of their work.
- We will support authors as they write new content that presents a diverse range of perspectives, is equitable, and inclusive.
- Our books will equip readers to think critically and help them engage with different theoretical approaches.
- Part of our programme will focus on commissioning books that work to decolonise their disciplines and push the boundaries of disciplinary knowledge.

Why are we taking this approach?
Our publishing influences what and how lecturers teach and how students learn. By embedding principles of diversity, equity and inclusion in what and how we publish, our book publishing can contribute to a more equal and just society.

- For lecturers, we can provide content that enables academics to develop more inclusive approaches to learning. Furthermore, we can support them to decolonise curricula, teaching, and assessment.
- For students, we can help them see themselves represented in our publishing by, for example, drawing on a wide range of examples. We can also introduce students to knowledge beyond the Eurocentric canon. Our books can empower students to understand and challenge oppression in all its intersecting forms.

Essential to this work is recognition of the role publishers have in producing and disseminating knowledge. We recognise that our content and signing practices have excluded marginalised people and privileged certain forms of knowledge and research methods over others. We are now taking active steps to mitigate the real-world harm that results from this, but acknowledge that this is a continuous process that cannot be ‘fixed’ with one set of actions. We will focus on making change where we can, and support and learn from existing movements across the world that seek to decolonise universities.

How will we get there?

- We will provide additional support as needed for authors, especially first-time authors, by offering, for example, language editing, enhanced chapter development, sensitivity readers and editorial feedback.
- We will make publishing more accessible for potential authors through free resources and guidelines and by being transparent about what authors can expect from SAGE and the publishing process.
- We will track how representative our authors are of our readers and society, for example through an anonymous survey, while recognising that issues of underrepresentation and exclusion are complex and intersecting.
- We will conduct internal training to educate and enable ourselves to better support authors to produce inclusive content. This includes learning more about decolonisation, antiracism, critical approaches to teaching and learning, as well as how to make the publishing industry more diverse, equitable and inclusive.
- We will assess content to ensure we don’t publish anything that is harmful to marginalised people. We will review each new book and new edition we publish with specific questions on diversity, equity, and inclusion, and collaborate with authors to rework content as needed.
- We will partner with and learn from other organisations that share our vision, as we know we cannot do this work alone. For example, we will continue partnering with The Amos Bursary and Leading Routes to support and amplify ongoing work to improve the experiences of Black students in Higher Education.

Read more about SAGE’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.