

Course05

What is Cultural Awareness?

Cultural awareness (or cultural sensitivity, cross-cultural / intercultural awareness) refers to the awareness of our own cultural identity, values and beliefs and the knowledge and acceptance of other's cultures. Cultural awareness helps break down cultural barriers and brings a better understanding of ourselves and a better appreciation of those who are different. This enhances our interpersonal skills, enables us to relate to people from other cultures and to build connections in a more meaningful way.

Cultural differences affect how we behave, work and communicate. In a work context, understanding that there are differences in values and belief systems between ourselves and people from other cultures and backgrounds results in better communication and fewer misunderstandings. It enables us to work in multicultural environments effectively and to make more collaborative decisions.

Examples of Cultural Differences:

- Communication: level of eye contact; how to be polite; directly saying what is meant versus using indirect speech and taking the context into account; preferring written or face-to-face communication etc.
- Attitudes to hierarchy and respect for authority figures (including superiors at work or Lecturers)
- Dress code
- Attitudes to time: some cultures value punctuality and others are more flexible towards time; some cultures are future-oriented and others are past-oriented

Find out more about the work of the Multicultural group and about [promoting multiculturalism](#) and eliminating discrimination in UCD.

LinkedIn Learning: "Cultural Awareness and Cross-Cultural Communication"

EDI curated a LinkedIn Learning collection on [\(opens in a new window\) Cultural Awareness and Cross-cultural Communication](#) for those working in multicultural environments who have an interest in improving their intercultural competence. Through the featured courses and videos,

you will learn about cultural differences and how they impact communication and working styles and will be able to better understand colleagues from other cultural, leading to more effective collaboration and communication.

Topics Included in the LiL Collection:

- Communicating Across Cultures (within teams, virtually, in person etc.)
- Developing Cross-cultural intelligence
- Giving Feedback Cross-culturally
- Collaborating Across Cultures
- Communicating about Culturally Sensitive Issues
- Cultivating Cultural Competence and Inclusion

Find out more on our Learning Supports [page](#).

Cultural Awareness in UCD

- The "**EDI in Higher Education**" eLearning training course touches on this subject in each of the four modules, from ensuring the curriculum is diverse and inclusive to taking into account cultural preferences when organising events. Find out more on our dedicated [page](#) under Learning Supports or access the training on [\(opens in a new window\)LearnUpon](#).
- UCD EDI run a number of **Cultural Awareness & Intercultural Communication training** sessions for employees. See the [EDI Training & Events calendar](#) to book onto the next available session.
- **Intercultural Learning** is a UCD Teaching & Learning Resource for Lecturers: <https://www.ucd.ie/teaching/resources/inclusiveandinterculturallearning/>
- **Intercultural Development Programme** for UCD students: [\(opens in a new window\)https://www.smurfitschool.ie/icd/](#)
- The Multicultural Employee Network of UCD (**MENU**) host regular coffee mornings on the various cultures represented in UCD, exploring themes like festivals, history, language, food, games, movies and travel. MENU also published a [MENU Cafe](#) recipe ebook with family recipes from various cultures. Keep an eye on their [\(opens in a new window\)social media](#) and join the next coffee morning in their Culture Café Series.



Links

- Ireland according to Hofstede Insights: ([opens in a new window](https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/ireland/))<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/ireland/>
- ICOS Irish Council for International Students ([opens in a new window](https://www.internationalstudents.ie/))<https://www.internationalstudents.ie/>
- GreggU "Cultural Differences" video ([opens in a new window](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wwwFc8Xgmho))<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wwwFc8Xgmho>
- Cross Cultural Communication, Pellegrino Riccardi, Tedx Bergen ([opens in a new window](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YMyofREc5Jk))<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YMyofREc5Jk>
- Welcome Ticket, an ERASMUS-funded project including training and a toolkit: ([opens in a new window](https://www.interculturalticket.eu/))<https://www.interculturalticket.eu/>