

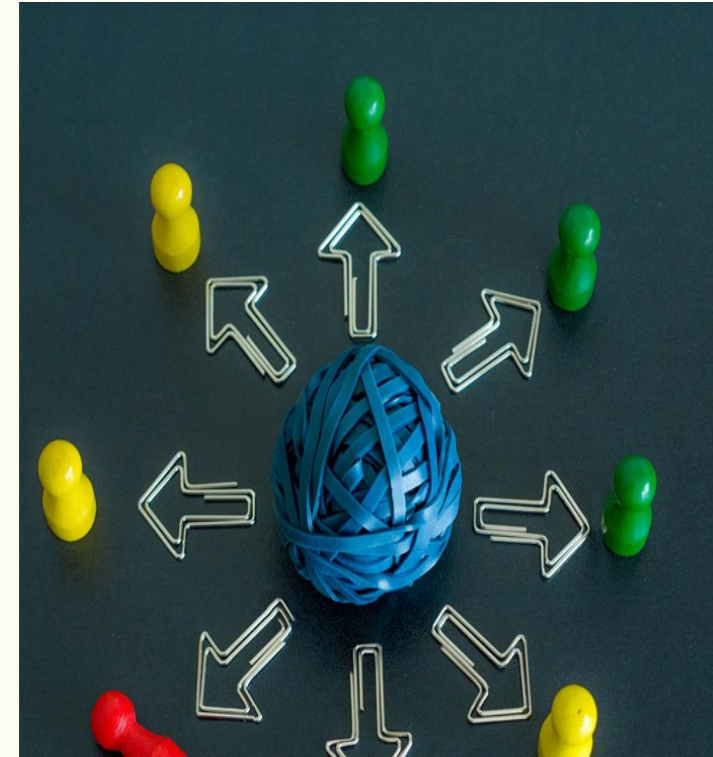
Decolonising Higher Education: From Social Justice Commitments to Institutional Practice



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Universities shape lives

- Higher education can open up new ways of thinking, relating and becoming.
- The same spaces can reproduce hierarchy, exclusion and silence.
- The question is not whether universities change people but how, for whom and at what cost.



Social justice is a question power

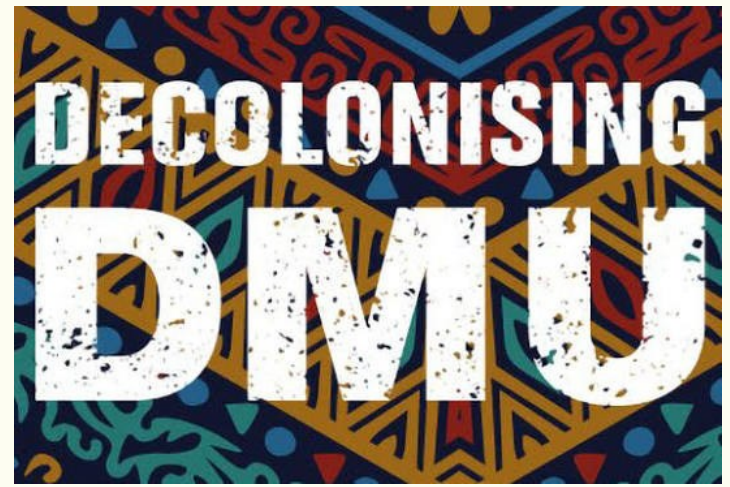
Universities often speak the language of inclusion while leaving institutional comfort undisturbed.

- Who defines legitimate knowledge?
- Who is heard, trusted and read as excellent?
- Whose discomfort is institutionally protected?
- Who is assumed to belong before entering the room?

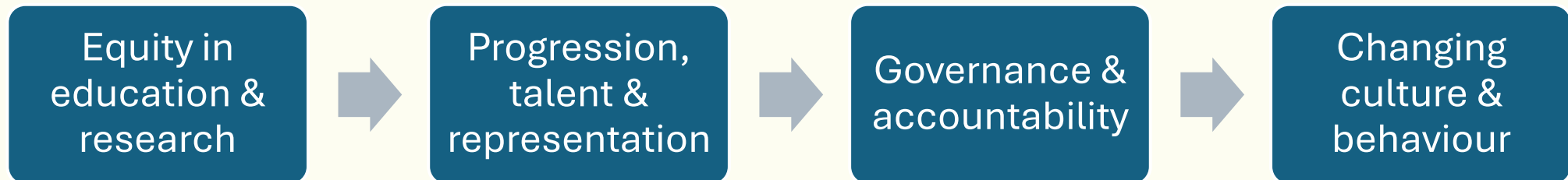


Decolonising DMU (DDMU)

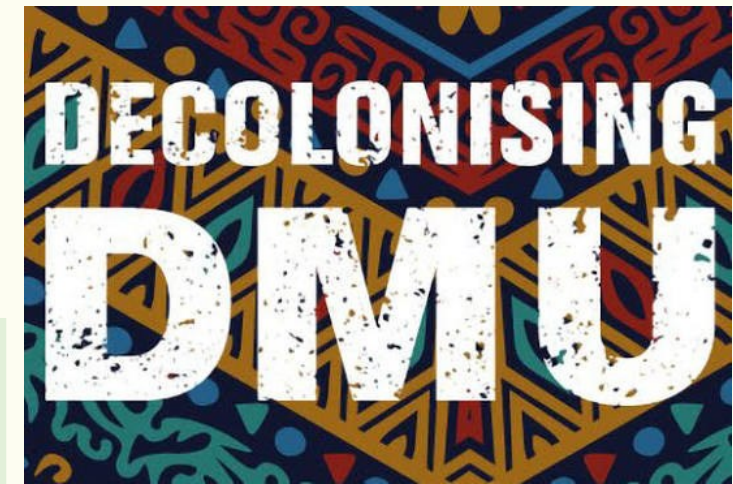
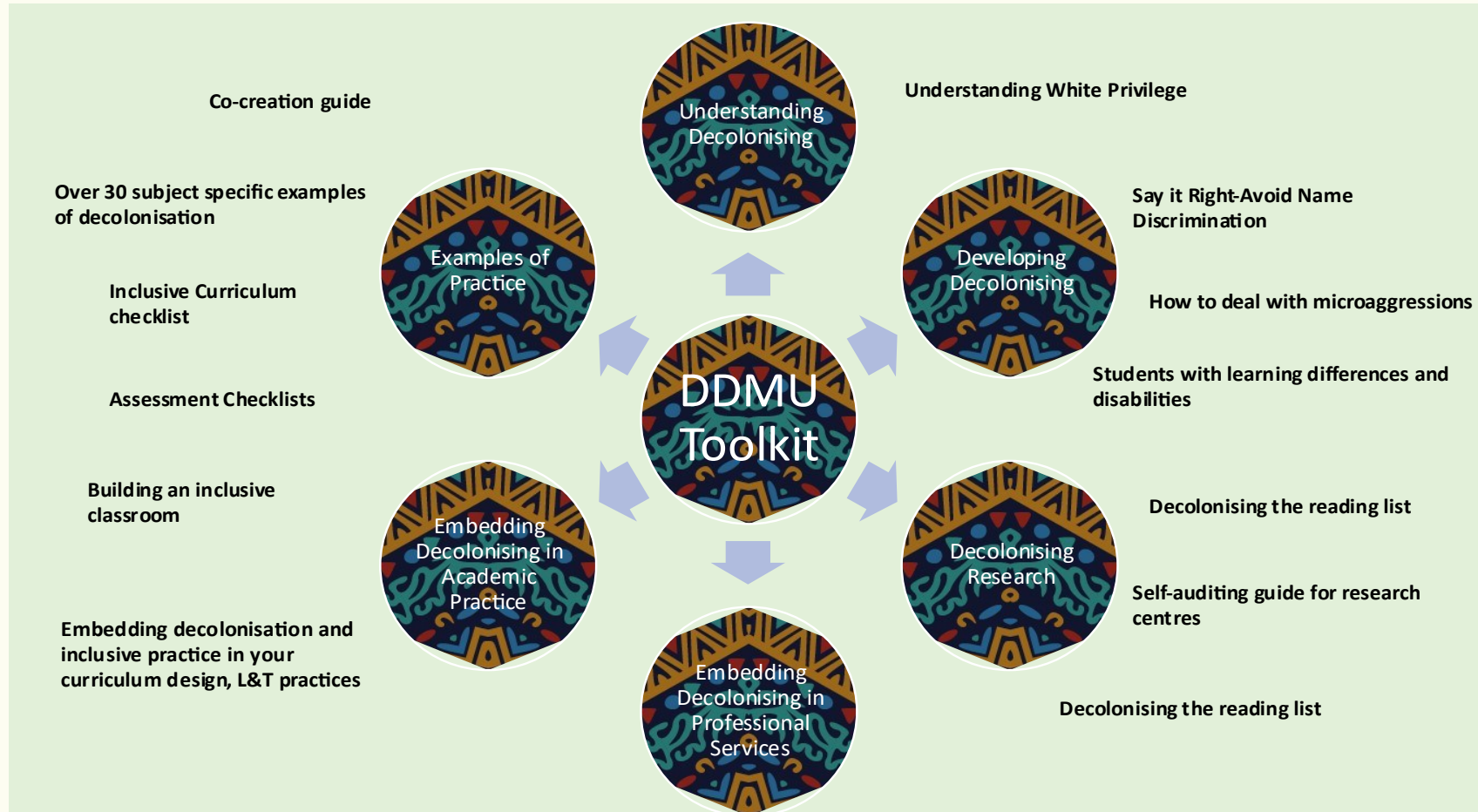
Not a slogan. Not a checklist. A practice of unsettling power



- Challenge racism and build an anti-racist university
- Dismantle barriers so staff and students can succeed
- Move from curriculum content to pedagogy, systems and culture.
- Decolonising practice is about examining the self: habits, reflexes, assumptions, authority and ways of seeing
- 4 commitments:



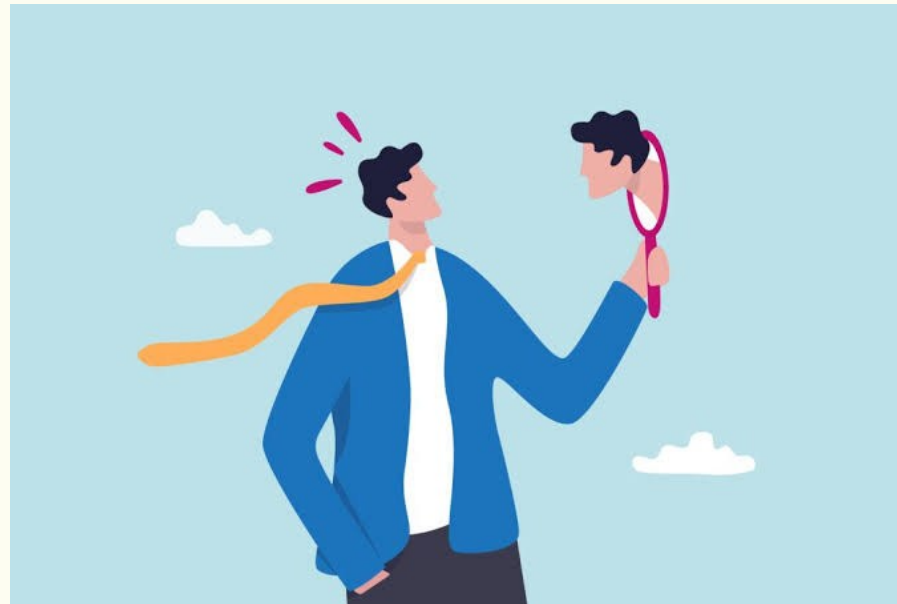
Decolonising DMU (DDMU) DDMU Toolkit



Positionality and critical reflexivity

The self is already in the room

- None of us teaches from nowhere.
- Biographies, identities, privileges, exclusions and disciplines shape how we teach.



Postgraduate Certificate in Empowering Education

Reimagining Higher
Education and
Addressing Inequality
and Justice in
Educational Practice



A caution: replacing one deficit model with another

- **Students are not the problem. Staff are not the fix. Structures need attention.**
- Higher education rightly challenged student deficit thinking.
- But staff can become positioned as the primary site of intervention.
- Equity work needs recognition, resourcing, time and shared accountability.

Compassionate Pedagogy & Belonging

- **Compassionate pedagogy is about taking context seriously. It understands care as inseparable from justice.**
- **Staff belonging matters too.**

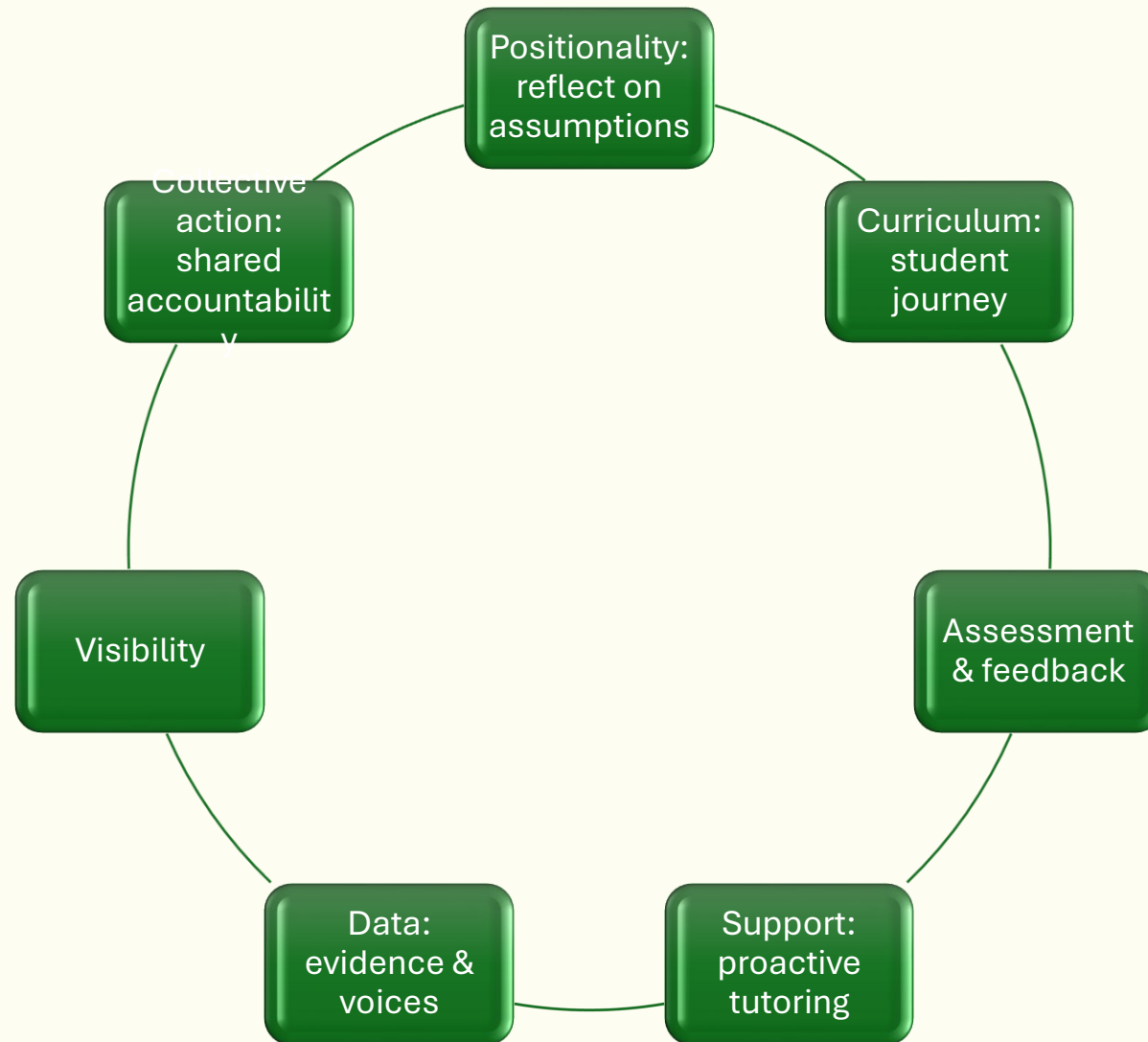


International Cookbook

‘How do we create spaces where students can bring more of themselves into the university?’



So, what can you do?



The invitation: reimagine higher education

- Teaching excellence as relationship, not optimisation.
- Inclusion as structural responsibility, not accommodation.
- Decolonisation as unsettling power, not a slogan.
- Staff development as agency, not compliance.
- Belonging as intentional design, not luck



No teaching excellence without equity.

No belonging without justice.

**No meaningful innovation without
inclusion.**

Thank you