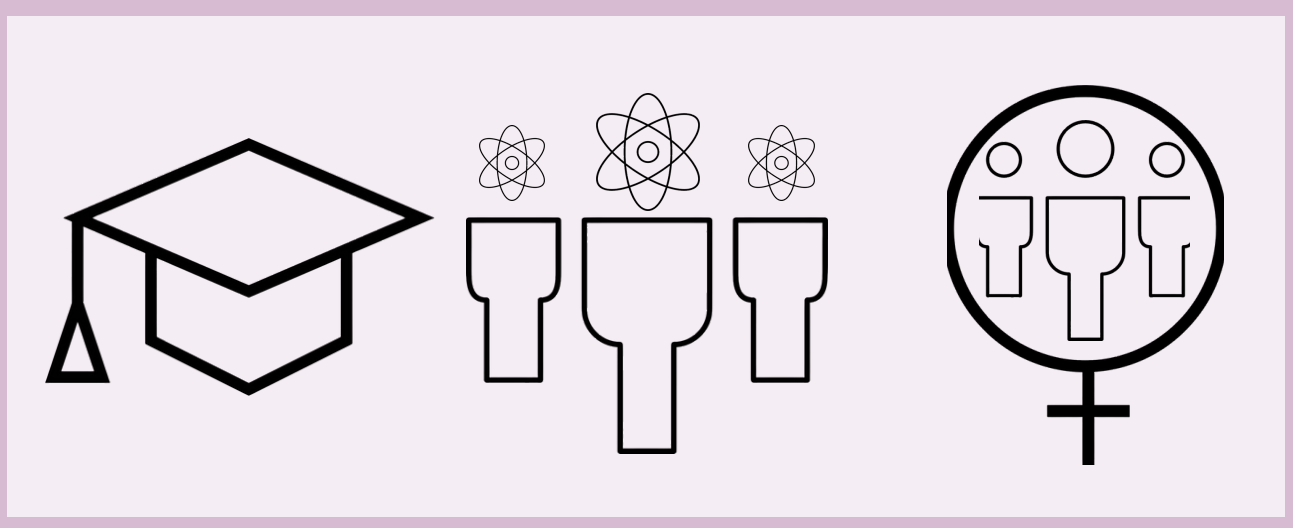
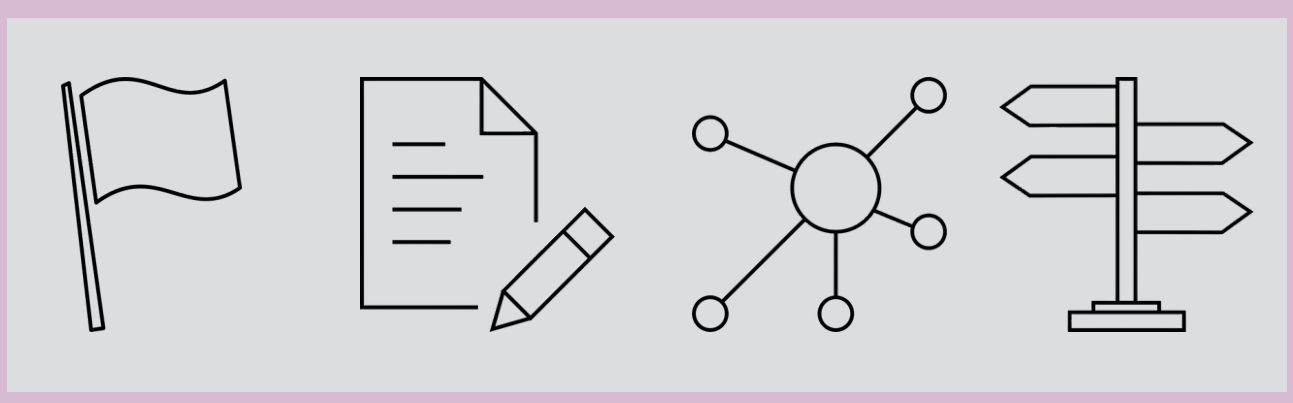
INSIGHTS REPORT

INCLUSIVE DOUBLE BACHELOR PROJECT





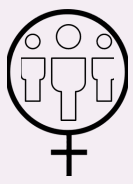


Teaching & Learning Centre

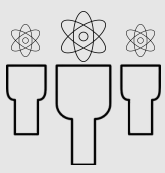
INSIGHTS REPORT
INCLUSIVE DOBA PROJECT

This report shares key insights from the Inclusive Double Bachelor Project (2024–2025), a collaboration between the Double Bachelor's in Mathematics and Physics & Astronomy and TLC Science. Three parallel lines of work explored how to make the programme more inclusive, especially for women. The report includes reflections from the female community, DoBa tutors, and lecturers. Each section is marked with an icon showing which group it refers to.

FEMALE DOBA COMMUNITY



DOBA TUTORS & STUDENTS

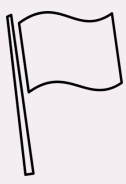


LECTURERS



Each report follows the same formula: it starts with the Why of the meeting, followed by the individual Experiences shared by those in attendance, the Insights that came from that, and What's Next: the agreed next steps.

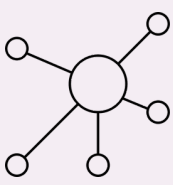
WHY



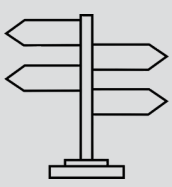
EXPERIENCES

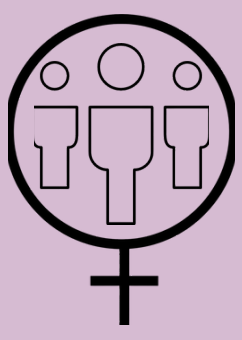


INSIGHTS



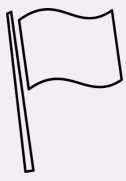
WHAT'S NEXT





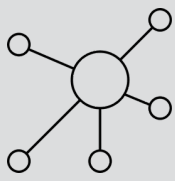
13 January 2025. In attendance: Female students, lecturers and study advisors from BSc Wis and N&S and STI.

WHY



- Education directors of Double Bachelor's programmes signal a gender disbalance: “Are we inclusive enough for all students?”

EXPERIENCES



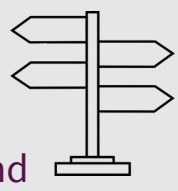
- Experience of unconscious bias, such as male peers explaining concepts unecessarily.
- Teachers addressing answers to male students instead of the female student who posed the question.
- Student switches to single Bachelor's programme due to gender stereotypes about her competence based on her appearance, and being treated differently by male peers.
- Student experiences feelings of isolation due to stereotyping from both peers and teachers on the intersection of gender and autism.

INSIGHTS

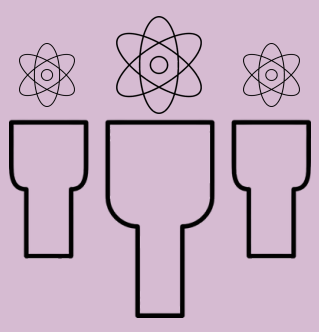


- This meeting marks the start of a motivated community with 6 students and 6 staff members.
- All female students and staff have diverse negative experiences to share and have been treated differently than their male peers.
- It is important to have attention for the individual differences between female students and possible intersectional experiences.
- Unconcious bias and gender stereotyping are experienced from both male and female peers and teachers. Often perceived as unintentional.
- Addressing gender stereotypes can risk backlash, like being labeled the “angry woman”. Male allies speaking up can help counter this.
- A community of women has the potential to support and inspire female students, but is not a solution for the experienced problem.

WHAT'S NEXT

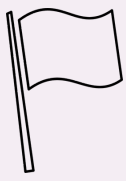


- Focus on improving the experience of female students and teachers by providing a platform for support, inspiration, and exchange.
- The community, led by Anna Watts and Eni Musta, will compile and prioritise a list of activities.
- Foster an inclusive culture within the programmes.



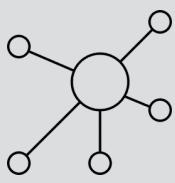
21 November 2024. In attendance: DoBa tutors, Academic skills coordinators and junior lecturer from BSc Wis and N&S.

WHY



- Education directors of Double Bachelor's programmes signal a gender disbalance: “Are we inclusive enough for all students?”

EXPERIENCES



- Tutors don't experience gender differences.
- Mixing DoBa and Single Bachelor's students does not by itself form an inclusive community, DoBa students then get the role of TA.

INSIGHTS

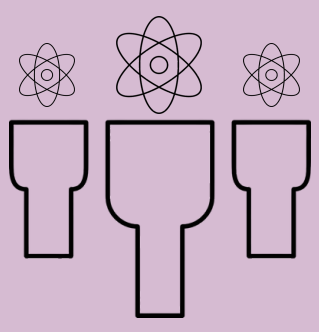


- The DoBa student population is split into high achievers (competing for top grades and extra EC) and nominal students (earning average grades at a standard pace).
- The DoBa norm is shifting toward high achievers, causing insecurity and dropouts among nominal students.
- Highlighting these two groups in class risks creating an “us vs. them” dynamic.

WHAT'S NEXT

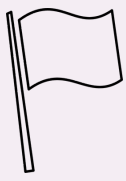


- Opportunity to improve a more inclusive environment and address insecurity among DoBa students.
- Tutors have a role to play in safeguarding the DoBa norm.
- Tutors can pay attention to this in individual mentor conversations.
- Tutors will distribute “Sense of Belonging” questionnaire in class with room for discussion.



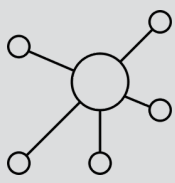
2 April 2025. In attendance: DoBa tutors, Academic skills coordinators and junior lecturer from BSc Wis and N&S.

WHY



- Reflecting on the “Sense of Belonging” results and insights from teachers and the Female Community to enhance the inclusivity of the Academic Skills course.

EXPERIENCES



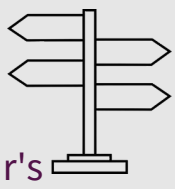
- Shocked by female students' experiences, tutors immediately reflected on possible unconscious biases in own behaviour.
- Female teacher never felt discouraged by gender stereotypes but now wonders their subconscious influence on her decisions.
- Male teacher realised panel was all men. Plans to diversify next time, being mindful not to overask female researchers.

INSIGHTS

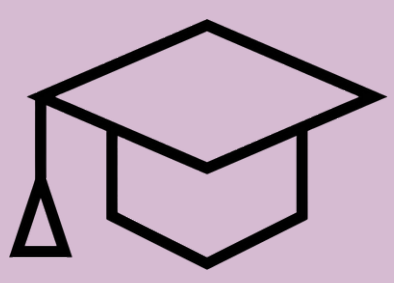


- Current “atypical” cohort has many students struggling, with currently five female students remaining.
- Awareness is key: Tutors can miss female students' challenges, but are open to change when made aware.
- Imposter syndrome is inherent to math. It involves feeling “stupid” when stuck and inadequate upon seeing the solution.
- Addressing identity, imposter syndrome, and inclusion in Academic skills course fosters students' learning , collaboration, confidence, and academic success.

WHAT'S NEXT

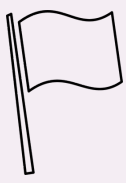


- The final tutor session will include a reflection on last year's experiences and stress mitigation strategies.
- The redesigned tutoring program for the coming academic year will incorporate topics like imposter syndrome and group dynamics.
- Clarify "nominal" expectations in DoBa, emphasising that extra courses or accelerating are not the default.
- Consider reinstating annual pizza session for DoBa students from all years to share their experiences.



4 November 2024. In attendance: programme directors and 6 lecturers BSc Wiskunde and BSc Natuur en sterrenkunde.

WHY



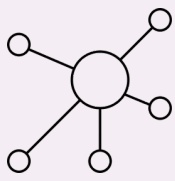
- Education directors of Double Bachelor's programmes signal a gender disbalance. "Are we inclusive enough for all students?"

EXPERIENCES



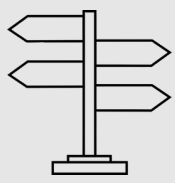
- All female teachers in the meeting have gender related negative experiences to share.
- Female teacher is more approached by female students and neurodivergent students for thesis supervision because of her inclusive supervision style.

INSIGHTS



- There is a more competative and ambitious culture in DoBa compared to single bachelor programmes.
- Gender issues are recognised throughout exact sciences, wider issue than just DoBa.
- Awareness of imlicit bias is needed for an inclusive culture.
- Female experience of discouragement for science is more expicit that male experience.
- Language about DuBa is experienced as not inclusive and encouraging for all.

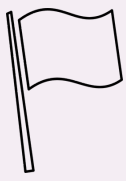
WHAT'S NEXT



- Aim for concrete actions.
- First focus on DoBa.
- Gather exact numbers.
- Get insight on DuBa student experience and needs through Sense of Beloning questionnaire.
- Look into inclusive language.
- Define necessary action groups to move forward.

30 January 2025. In attendance: programme directors and lecturers BSc Wiskunde and BSc Natuur en sterrenkunde.

WHY



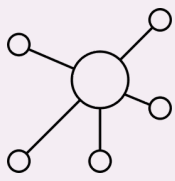
- Creating values for the DoBa program and defining actions to get there.

EXPERIENCES



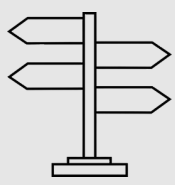
- Male lecturer finds that intentional silence leads to more meaningful interactions.
- Recognising privilege can create insightful feelings of awkwardness.
- Male teachers felt unfairly accused of gender bias when when rejecting a female candidate they deemed unsuitable.
- Female lecturer actively seeks a safe work environment; and a personal invitation to apply can support this.

INSIGHTS

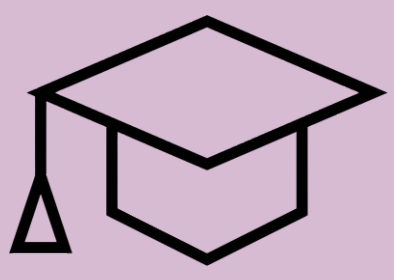


- First teacher session already affected awareness of different experiences in the community.
- Language matters, active promotion to female students will help them consider the DoBa.
- Gender differences in seeking employment can be informative in approaching potential DoBa students.
- The DoBa culture should avoid elitism, as words like "challenging" and "excellence" can be perceived differently and may foster exclusivity.
- Defined values for the Double Bachelor are: Motivation, Empowerment, Collaboration, and Community

WHAT'S NEXT

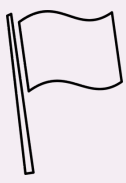


- Action groups defined:
  - Empowerment & Motivation (Raf Bocklandt):
    - Use inclusive outreach language, emphasising curiosity and fun over challenge and excellence.
    - Explore influx possibilities in second year
  - Community & Collaboration (Chase Broedersz):
    - Designing collaborative activities with sensitivity to differences to build inclusive community.



20 May 2025. In attendance: programme directors and lecturers BSc Wiskunde and BSc Natuur en sterrenkunde.

WHY



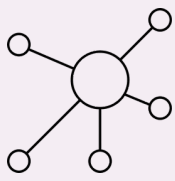
- Reflecting on action group efforts and looking ahead to achieve sustainable impact.

EXPERIENCES



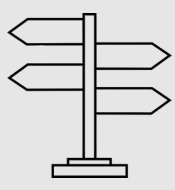
- Self-imposed feeling of pressure to be fully inclusive before the end of this project.
- Openly sharing failures can reduce imposter feelings by highlighting you're not alone.
- Fear of failure may deter people from addressing complex issues like inclusivity.
- A teacher learned from failure after being addressed on non-inclusive language.
- Collaborative learning in physics class prompted inclusivity questions: “Are dominant speakers and mandatory group work truly inclusive?”

INSIGHTS



- Expanding the project to single Bachelor's programmes was essential, as the issues are not exclusive to double Bachelor's.
- Inclusive language involves openness to feedback, not perfection, as a key pillar of inclusivity.
- Inclusive language emphasises openness to feedback over perfection, a key pillar of an inclusive mindset.
- Cultivating a culture where mistakes are acceptable requires teacher examples and integrating failure into the curriculum.
- Optimising tutorials requires shifting from homework sessions to more active learning, a change that's not easy or intuitive for teachers and TAs.
- To enhance outreach texts, expertise in discipline-specific inclusive language and student perspectives is essential.
- **Doing nothing is the real failure, everything else is success.**

WHAT'S NEXT



- Action groups:
  - Empowerment & Motivation (Raf Bocklandt):
    - Have an inclusive language expert and minority students review the website content.
    - Add more female interviews and highlight diverse narratives beyond mathematics and physics on the website.
  - Community & Collaboration (Chase Broedersz):
    - Continue and expand experimentation documentation as inspiration.
    - Involve TAs actively.
    - Have students summarise lectures, not TAs.
    - Make the first 30 minutes of tutorials interactive.
    - Each action group member recruit one more teacher to double impact.
    - View TA reduction as a chance to reorganise tutorials.