

## 2.1

## HIGHLIGHTS AND CHALLENGES

Transformation, inclusivity and diversity are interconnected yet distinct concepts that can help with making sense of the nature of inequality within higher education and the effects of the solutions that are developed.

To create **Inclusive Education** we need to acknowledge that different students face different barriers in the learning environment. Barriers can include lack of funding, experiences of discrimination, and education that is not disability inclusive. Inclusive education removes barriers limiting the participation and achievement of students, respects diverse needs, abilities and characteristics, and eliminates all forms of discrimination.

**Diversity** is about appreciating that we are all different. Our differences occur along the lines of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, disability, sexuality and age, among other factors. Critical diversity acknowledges the role of power in creating difference, and the unequal symbolic and material values associated with different groups. This approach locates difference within a historical legacy, as an outcome of oppressive systems.

**Transformation** acknowledges that education in South Africa was deeply impacted by apartheid and colonialism. For example, the lack of representation of people of colour, women and persons living with disabilities in certain fields is due to historic exclusion and marginalisation. Transformation aims to respond to this history of exclusion through programmes which enable and encourage historically excluded groups to participate fully in university life.