



***Survey of discrimination at the Haagse Hogeschool [Hague University]  
as commissioned by the Commissie Gelijke Behandeling [Equal Treatment Commission]***

*Report dated 27 April 2009*

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**Foreword**

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The Dutch Equal Treatment Commission (ETC) gives judgements on individual complaints. It may also investigate on its own initiative whether in an organisation or sector of society discrimination takes place in a systematic way.

After the Commission had judged favourably several individual complaints of racial discrimination against a University of Applied Sciences (17.000 students), the ETC started discussion with the executive board of the university in order to create a positive attitude towards the conduct of a broad investigation on possible mechanisms of discrimination and in order to solicit cooperation within the university.

Although the ETC could have conducted such investigation without any consent of the university, the university and the ETC agreed upon

- the questions investigated
- the objectives of the investigations
- the methods and approach of investigation
- the members of the supervising committee
- the choice of the external investigating consultancy

The objectives of the investigation were defined as:

- to acquire insight into the existence, nature and scale of discrimination at the University and particularly in the Social Work Department on the ground of ethnic origin. This primarily means identifying the mechanisms and patterns that cause people to be discriminated against, or feel discriminated against.
- to acquire insight into possible types of solutions which with a discrimination-free learning environment can be achieved in the specific situation and which can also be applied more generally.

The outcome of the investigation has been that classical forms of discriminations have been found, often in forms which are more visible and tangible for ethnic minority staff and students than for native Dutch staff and students. The strong focus of diversity at the top of the organisation had not been accompanied by a clear implementation strategy nor by a comparable focus on awareness and skills for managers and staff to deal properly with discrimination situations in daily practice. The policy as a system did not offer sufficient protection to people against discrimination experiences. Lack of control and a unclear personnel policy exacerbated discrimination experiences.

The investigators formulated 21 recommendations to management and staff at organisational level, at academic programme level and at personnel policy level.



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In the final hearing on the results of the investigation the University did not contest any of the conclusions of the investigators and took the recommendations for a starting point for its new strategic plan. It informed its staff, its students and the press accordingly. It explicitly mentioned the impartiality and thoroughness of the investigation.

The board of the University sees it as its social obligation to inform other institutions of its experiences and gained insights. One of the board members gave a speech on a congress organised by the ETC on the roles and responsibilities of the different actors on the working floor, in schools and in the business sector of goods and services.

The ETC is of the opinion that these positive results have been gained by treating the University not only as a defendant in an investigation but also as an important stakeholder in the process of combating discrimination.

## 8. Summary and conclusions

In this section we answer the questions on which the survey was based. We first examine the concept of discrimination, then its nature and scale and the differences between the education institutions, staff and students involved. We then draw conclusions as to whether systematic discrimination exists at the institution. First we provide a reminder of the questions on which the survey was based, as formulated by the Commissie Gelijke Behandeling (CGB) [Equal Treatment Commission].

### *Questions investigated*

1. Are there mechanisms within the HHS which mean that people are prejudiced/ discriminated against (sooner) on the grounds of characteristics related to their origin, or which mean that people at least feel prejudiced or discriminated against and if so, what are these?
2. What solutions (of varying effectiveness) are available for the mechanisms found?

The objectives of the survey are:

- To acquire insight into the existence, nature and scale of discrimination at the Haagse Hogeschool and then particularly on the Social Work [MWD] programme (which is part of the Academie voor Sociale Professies [Academy of Social Professions] on the grounds of ethnic origin. This primarily means identifying the mechanisms and patterns that cause people to be discriminated against, or feel discriminated against. It is recommended that another programme also be investigated at the HHS.
- To acquire insight into possible types of solution with which a discrimination-free learning environment can be achieved in the specific situation at the Haagse Hogeschool and which can also be applied more generally.

### *Approach used*

Key figures were interviewed at HHS level regarding school policy and culture in relation to diversity and discrimination. After that, individual interviews and group discussions were held with staff and students of both the MWD/Academie voor Sociale Professies and CE/Academie voor Marketing&Commerce [Academy for Marketing&Commerce]. These groups were formed on the basis of function and ethnicity. A digital survey was then held among all students and staff of both programmes or academies in so far as they were involved in the programmes. Lastly, the results were discussed in mixed groups: at HHS level and by staff of both programmes/academies.

### **8.1. Conclusions regarding the concept of discrimination**

People involved in the survey interpret the concept of discrimination in different ways and therefore assess one and the same situation or comment differently. Interpretations of the concept range from broad to limited. This difference is often based along ethnic lines, with people from ethnic minorities applying a broader interpretation than native Dutch people involved in the survey, based on a number of experiences and after having seen what has happened to other people from ethnic minorities. Native Dutch people emphasise that something is discrimination if it is also intended to be such, that is saying or doing something with the deliberate intention of putting another/other people into second place. In principle, people from ethnic minorities also apply this definition but they experience the (unconscious) differentiating effect more often, that is irrespective of whether it

was the intention to discriminate or prejudice. Incidentally, if native Dutch people are asked about their own experiences, they refer to things which may also have not be said/done by another with the deliberate intention to discriminate.

A genuine difference between people from ethnic minorities and native Dutch people is that people from ethnic minorities feel (even more) discriminated against if *they are not taken seriously when they point out or complain about discrimination*. Native Dutch people do not generally regard a failure to take a complaint seriously as discrimination.

*The existence of broader and narrower interpretations of the concept of discrimination means that the native Dutch people who took part in the survey often feel wrongfully accused of something that, in general terms, they roundly condemn, that they take such allegations very seriously and do all they can to refute them. For people from ethnic minorities the different interpretations mean a lack of acknowledgement of the discrimination they experience, which in turn adds to their experience of discrimination.*

## 8.2. Conclusions regarding the nature and scale of discrimination

The interviews, the group discussions and the survey reveal that discrimination occurs in both programmes. Discrimination is more prevalent at SoPro/MWD than at M&C/CE:

- more *personal experiences* among Sopro/MWD staff (18%) and students (33%) in comparison to M&C/CE staff and students (2 and 21% resp.); the vast majority of the people affected are ethnic minority staff and students, with the discrimination relating to the underestimation of qualities and having to listen to ‘jokes’ and comments on origin, religion and skin colour.
- o For staff too: fewer career opportunities and a lack of response to complaints about discrimination;
- o For students: the failure to take views and comments seriously.
- Staff who indicate that they are discriminated against experience this primarily in relation to their superiors; students experience this most often in contacts with teachers, as well as with fellow students and year coordinators, team leaders or management.
- There are more *observations* of discrimination in the work and learning environment: half the Sopro/MWD staff and students indicate that they have observed discrimination; at M&C/CE the same applied to 10% of staff and 21% of CE students. Once again the discrimination had to do with the underestimation of qualities and the telling of ‘jokes’ about origin, religion and skin colour. M&C/CE staff state that they have never observed people from ethnic minorities being prejudiced as regards getting a good job; Sopro/MWD staff state that they have.
- More people *being called to account* regarding discriminating behaviour: Sopro/MWD staff are told twice as often that they exhibit discriminating behaviour (usually teachers, native Dutch and slightly more men than women); the situation is different among students with, in fact, more female ethnic minority students being called to account about such behaviour.
- A greater *conviction that colleagues discriminate against each other* (held by 33% of SoPro/MWD staff in contrast to M&C/CE where not a single employee thinks this is the case). MWD students also think this more often than CE students and ethnic minority students more than native Dutch students. A quarter of both MWD and CE students do not know whether teachers discriminate; 34% of both MWD and CE students think that this is the case.

The responses to all the questions posed revealed that

- students experience more discrimination than staff;
- people from ethnic minorities experience more discrimination than native Dutch people;
- female students experience more discrimination than male students;
- and full-time students more than part-time students.

Situations of being discriminated against or feeling discriminated against referred to primarily by SoPro/MWD ethnic minority and native Dutch staff and students have to do with the following:

- a. 'Jokes', insulting or condescending comments about people with a 'different' skin colour, origin or religion; pigeon-holing people and stereotyping: 'That is typical of Turkish people', 'Girls with head scarves are oppressed', 'They (female students with a Muslim background) are surely not free to choose when to get pregnant', etc.
- b. Giving people from one ethnic group a job sooner than people from another ethnic group: unclear application, recruiting and promotion procedures which, at the very least, give the impression that native Dutch people get jobs, a promotion and a permanent appointment more easily. No transparency as to why there are differences as regards recruitment, permanent appointments, etc.
- c. Portraying people from ethnic minorities as people with problems, always needing help or always being the ones causing problems (e.g. Moroccan or Antillean youths).
- d. Underestimating the qualities of ethnic minority teachers and students in comparison to those of native Dutch teachers and students: people who always address a 'white' colleague, not taking suggestions on changes to teaching methods by people from ethnic minority colleagues seriously, hesitation as regards deciding which students should participate in a group.
- e. Not taking complaints about discrimination seriously: a number of problems persist without ever being resolved and complaints and conflicts are not dealt with properly.
- f. Demanding that all students write perfect Dutch: Despite the fact that the vast majority of staff and students believe this to be an appropriate requirement, and only a small number of people regard it as a strategy for exclusion, it is a major source of stress and is also enforced in practice in very different ways.
- g. Imposing your own religion or mode of living on someone else; native Dutch people involved in the survey also refer to this as discrimination 'the other way around': feeling or experiencing that you are no longer able to speak freely in class about, or refer to, matters which you consider to be core values: equality between men and women, the right to freedom of choice as regards sexual orientation, etc.

*'Classical' forms of discrimination therefore exist in both programmes, often in forms which are more visible and tangible for ethnic minority staff and students than for native Dutch staff and students. A number of native Dutch people involved in the survey feel discriminated against due to what they regard as constrictions on expressing their own views. In themselves these findings are not exactly surprising. That is the case in a lot of work and education situations (see the various discrimination monitors that are regularly published). Within the framework of this survey it is important whether and how mechanisms at the HHS and both programmes encourage discrimination, or indeed discourage it. For example, why does discrimination occur less at M&C/CE than at Sopro/MWD? This is the focus of the following paragraphs.*

### 8.3. Conclusions regarding discrimination policy and management

#### *Diversity policy*

The HHS has for years invested in proper responses to the changing social environment at the school based on there being a lot more ethnic minority students of which many are first generation students, ever more stringent requirements as regards quality and transparency and the internationalisation of the education. Those diversity-related efforts resulted practically in the appointment of internal diversity advisers, the setting up of complaints procedures, an extensive talent development programme and pilots to equip teachers. Staff appreciate the diversity-related efforts at HHS level as such.

However, there is often no specific implementation strategy in relation to both the curriculum and the interpretation of the personnel policy and the problems which - ethnic minority and native Dutch - people experience at work.

#### *Combating discrimination at HHS level*

As regards the evaluation of the policy at HHS level to prevent and combat discrimination, there are no major differences as such between the staff of the two programmes. Staff state that complaints committees, confidential advisers and courses on intercultural skills are in place but that people are not very confident that these will be effective.

As regards policy and management at HHS level it is noticeable that hardly any staff and students have observed active monitoring by management with a view to preventing discrimination: only 18 % of staff and 11 % of students. In this context there is no major difference between MWD and CE.

Perhaps even more worryingly, no ethnic minority staff members made this observation either - and that applies to both programmes. However, staff do realise that attention is being paid to diversity at HHS level, although a quarter of students do not. Therefore, a focus on diversity is no guarantee, in the eyes of staff who have acknowledged this focus, that this generally applies or guarantees the active discouragement of discrimination.

#### *Combating discrimination at programme level*

There is (once again) a major difference between SoPro/MWD and M&C/CE as regards the assessment of the individual programme's policy and management to combat discrimination. The focus is then on tackling discrimination, openly discussing problems and working towards creating a safe learning climate. A lot of M&C/CE staff (60%) and students (60%) indicate that they are unaware of the current situation. The SoPro/MWD percentages are just 5% and 39% respectively. Of those who do have a view on the matter, M&C/CE staff, generally native Dutch staff and male students, are the most positive. Ethnic minority staff and (female) students at SoPro/MWD are the most negative. People do not feel that matters are being tackled or that incidents are really responded to and neither do people think there is sufficient openness to discuss situations of intercultural tensions.

As regards equipping staff, Sopro staff are two times more likely than M&C staff to state that they are insufficiently equipped. There are no obvious differences between native Dutch and ethnic



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minorities, nor between men and women. However, people from ethnic minorities and female staff are more uncertain about this.

As regards all these points, ethnic minority staff and (female) students at SoPro/MWD are less satisfied than native Dutch staff and (male) students. As a whole, SoPro/MWD staff and MWD students are less satisfied than comparable groups at M&C/CE, although a lot of M&C staff and CE students indicate that they are not familiar with procedures.

There is a lot more satisfaction with the assessment of the individual intercultural competencies.

#### *Explanation of the complaints to the CGB*

The differences between both programmes, between ethnic minority and native Dutch and between female and male students, are most worrying in relation to the statements on the complaints by ethnic minority staff to the CGB on which the CGB decided favourably in 2008. People were asked to provide possible explanations for those complaints by ethnic minority teachers. Explanations varied from 'they are individual cases, conflicts at work which can occur anywhere' to 'some people at the HHS would prefer there not to be too many people with a different ethnic origin'. In a certain sense a breach of confidence is visible between ethnic minority students/staff and the management of the MWD programme:

- A considerable number of ethnic minority MWD students (33 of the 137) and 9 native Dutch students consider 'the undesirability of people with a different ethnic background at the school' as an explanation; 4 staff members regard this as an explanation. This is not many but all 4 are of ethnic minority origin; not one M&C/CE staff member refers to this and only a small percentage of CE students.
- A considerable number of SoPro staff and students think that 'failing management' is the explanation, but this view is not shared at M&C/CE.

*The strong focus on diversity by those at the top of the organisation has not been accompanied by a clear implementation strategy (curriculum and personnel), nor by a comparable focus on awareness and skills for managers and staff (ethnic minority and native Dutch) to deal properly with discrimination situations in daily practice. This results in incidents relating to discrimination not always tackled adequately (this is better at CE than at MWD) and this, in turn, has a seriously negative effect on the confidence of ethnic minority staff and students in the organisation's management. They do not feel protected in this area of their lives which is so important to them. Some of the native Dutch staff (mainly at MWD) feel let down by the management because they are confronted by intercultural issues and tensions for which the University or the programme have not developed a shared vision and approach.*

#### **8.4. Conclusions regarding systematic discrimination**

We defined systematic discrimination in H2 as follows: ways of differentiating in which patterns can be identified and which are caused by mechanisms or systems, with system being interpreted as a social system; organisation system (culture, policy), group processes and identity issues. Can patterns described above be traced back to such systems?

### ***Society as a system***

The definition of systematic discrimination as described above is based on the idea that a social system reinforces differentiation within organisations. At the HHS we have seen how the social turbulence relating to ethnicity and religion affects the school community: in image forming, in a hardening of positions and in the way in which the concept of discrimination is interpreted or the way in which discrimination (signs) is (are) responded to. The degree to which this effect is felt differs per organisation (part) as reflected by the major differences between MWD and CE and this, in turn, is related to the policy and culture at the organisation or organisation part concerned. The above definition therefore refers to systematic discrimination with society being a system that affects the school. Of course it is important to realise that this effect of society is not unique to the HHS, but applies to many - if not all - organisations in which people with differing backgrounds meet. However, the HHS is an organisation in the front line of the inter-ethnic debate.

### ***Organisation as a system***

At HHS level attention, promotion and resources have been made available in the form of manpower and funding for diversity based on the sincere ambition to improve the school's position and to enable it to function in a multi-ethnic society. However, this policy is not being sufficiently implemented nor are its effects being sufficiently felt at academy and programme level.

At academy/programme level there are major differences between MWD and CE as regards being and feeling discriminated against. There is a difference in 'degree of complexity' between CE and MWD. This is due, first of all, to the own value orientation of those involved in the survey and, second of all, to the job content as such. MWD native Dutch and ethnic minority staff have clear views on how values they regard as important should be visible in the programme climate (freedom of choice, male-female relations, sexual orientation, diversity, equal rights, etc.) and they respond vigorously if they feel that these values are being eroded. In addition, the profession of MWD means that, as a future care provider, you learn to recognise your own responses to a number of normative issues which are inherent to social work. This creates the need for a professional debate on the matter and these days that, in turn, means teachers need to have a lot more intercultural skills. Indeed, within MWD there is no professional dialogue between colleagues about how the profession has changed, how one should deal with the changes and what insights have been gained (elsewhere) into the new situation. This is even more topical/urgent given the composition of the student population and the profession they are going to be joining.

MWD is subject to more intense dynamism than CE. However, discrimination is also experienced within the latter programme. We can see the effects of the combination of type of students and staff, job content, culture, control and policy:

- At MWD we see how this specific combination of normative job content, a strong (values) orientation on the part of staff and students, a culture of making matters personal, a lack of control and an unclear personnel policy results in an accumulation and almost unmanageable situation as regards being or feeling discriminated against. In other words it forms an important foundation for discrimination experiences which result in incidents being linked together to form patterns.
- In the case of CE we see how the combination of job content (less normative), type of people (commercial orientation), culture (client central), clear and solution-oriented control and a clear



personnel policy actually provide a certain degree of protection against discrimination experiences. In other words, issues have a much smaller chance to accumulate and (for the time being) continue to be *restricted to incidents*, or just seen as incidents.

This is managed at CE and the experiences therefore remain incidental. In the case of MWD this is certainly not controlled but, conversely, is exacerbated by the combination of the factors referred to above.

When defining systematic discrimination at organisation level, we can conclude that the *policy as a system* at HHS level does not offer sufficient protection to people against discrimination experiences.

The combination of high ambitions on the one hand and the unclear translation to everyone's professional practice on the other has increased the vulnerability of ethnic minority staff, who have become symbolic for the diversity policy and who have stuck out their necks in this field. However, it also offers insufficient security to native Dutch staff who have to find their way in these complicated intercultural situations and who are naturally liable to make mistakes and be accused of discrimination.

In terms of *culture as a system* we can conclude that the mix of people, culture and job content at MWD with, by definition, a lot of normative subjects forms a major risk of discrimination experiences. It has also become evident how clear control and personnel policy at CE reduce the - albeit smaller - risks present there as well, and how at MWD indeed a lack of control and an unclear personnel policy exacerbate discrimination experiences.

At MWD there is no leadership, personnel policy or culture of interaction in which that (unjust) differentiation is properly investigated or the problems correctly identified. Therefore, it persists. In such an environment, *individual* and *incidental* experiences accumulate to form a *pattern*. This confirms to the ethnic minority staff and students involved that discrimination is not an incident that happens to 'you' but something more along the lines of 'we are being deliberately and systematically discriminated against.'

#### ***Group processes and identity issues as a system***

CE staff see each other in the first place as professional colleagues while CE students see the ethnic differences, although there is more space for 'other' similarities, for example sharing the same urban background, irrespective of ethnic differences. At MWD it has become more difficult for ethnic minority and native Dutch staff and students to act as *individuals* and staff are under considerable pressure to adopt a position. This leads to undesirable 'us and them' relations. It is also the case that, during their years at the university, students become increasingly aware of each other as ethnic minority or native Dutch due to polarised discussions in the classroom. These group processes also pave the way for patterns of discrimination experiences.

## 9. Recommendations

In this section we formulate pretexts for the HHS to change and prevent patterns that have developed in relation to discrimination at HHS level and at programme level.

### 9.1. Relevance to other education institutions

The (social) causes of discrimination and resulting patterns are not exclusive to the HHS and can also occur in other education organisations. We expect the findings and recommendations to provide pretexts for other education institutions as well for the identification of the potential risks they run as regards discrimination, how to prevent incidents from turning into patterns and how to strengthen *protective* policy and culture based factors.

#### *Recognising discrimination*

Given the extent of the environmental influences of a *society as a system* in which discrimination occurs, it is impossible to prevent people interacting with (a certain degree of) prejudice in work and learning situations. Images, views, preconceived ideas, experiences and sensitivities result in a feeling of and/or actual *discrimination incidents*. Ignoring such discrimination ‘because it is not permitted’ or due to indifference is not an option and only results in an even more forceful discrimination experience. So how should one respond? Even if it may never be fully possible to avoid - this feeling of - discrimination, *organisation systems such as policy and culture* can certainly play a *protecting* role to prevent a foundation being created in which incidents are linked together to form patterns. Management steering towards an intercultural curriculum, a method of working in an intercultural classroom and a transparent personnel policy are crucial aspects. The same applies to native Dutch and ethnic minority staff with the required intercultural competencies who feel supported in difficult inter-ethnic situations, whether in the context of colleagues or the lesson situation. Eventually, ethnic minority and native Dutch students benefit from this because, based on a shared vision, curriculum and method of working are suitable to the changed reality inside and outside the classroom. Clarity for and by teachers contributes to a safe learning climate.

### 9.2. Recommendations at HHS level

The discussion of discrimination at the HHS has been going on for a long time within MWD and has caused emotions to run high. It will be far from easy to instil calm precisely because of the long history of the debate with the corresponding damage caused to those involved in the survey, both ethnic minority and native Dutch. What is more, there is an external environment which underlines the daily forms of differentiation that exist in society, sometimes in a positive way but more often in a negative way. We have seen how that external setting affects the school. There are also developments which - quite apart from discrimination as such - are of considerable influence on what happens in the classroom. Examples are points of departure which form the basis for current teaching methods and strategy in relation to first generation students with the question being to what extent these match up.

In the context of these kinds of ‘big’ issues, the idea is not simply to change ‘something’. That is why there is a certain degree of modesty as regards the ‘feasibility of the desired situation’. In the



following recommendations we first formulate pretexts at HHS level, followed by academy or programme level and lastly for MWD in general.

- Acknowledge that where people - staff and students - with different backgrounds meet, prejudiced views and expectations will play a role from both sides. Acknowledge that, in certain exceptional circumstances - based on a combination of factors - this can lead to more or indeed less of a foundation for (a feeling of) discrimination. Acknowledge that the aim of the school management is to ensure that protective factors such as clear control and a transparent personnel policy are, in a certain sense, the 'basics' when it comes to preventing experiences with discrimination linking up to form patterns and to become a dominant factor.
- Be clear about a narrow or broad interpretation of the concept of discrimination. As long as (groups of) people adopt and maintain different points of departure, unfruitful verbal confusion and the definition debate will persist.
- Formulate a diversity policy with a realistic setting focused on people from ethnic minorities and native Dutch people because everyone has to learn to relate to, and be able to operate professionally in, a variety of school and professional situations.
- In this context, 'realistic' means that diversity can be a value to be pursued but that its realisation confronts most organisations with difficult problems for which there are no simple blueprint solutions.
- Set out an implementation strategy, that is design - with people in key positions such as Executive Board, HRM director, HR chairman, academy directors supported by diversity advisers - ways in which objectives can also be actually realised in the very different practical situations. Make appropriate agreements and monitor these, offer support and, above all, organise the discussion about what people come up against in practice, facilitate the appropriate exchanges and not only by those who are already 'supporters' of diversity.
- Implementation is a lot more than representativeness or achieving a number of target percentages. It also, and above all, means that ethnic minority and native Dutch staff and students are able to engage in discussions with each other and 'learn' about their profession and behaviour in a multi-ethnic context of customers and clients.
- Attention for diversity is no guarantee for effective discrimination-related action. Following on from the recommendations ensuing from the recent internal survey into complaint procedures: these have to exist but are the 'final stage'. The idea is much more that, based on their exemplary function, managers must, in any event, display intercultural sensitivity and be able to investigate what is going on with the people involved in the survey without judging or condemning beforehand one way or the other. Investigating a discrimination experience is not in itself a condemnation or proof that it 'then has to be true', also taking account of the very different interpretations of the concept of discrimination. Precisely because 'proving' is so difficult and because an approximation of the burden of proof is not beneficial to mutual relations, the real benefit is that - all - those involved in the survey are listened to and at least understand why something has taken place or is interpreted in a certain way and are encouraged, on the basis of the information, to change their behaviour accordingly. In the event of legitimate complaints, suitable measures must (of course) be taken and the external communication has to be clear about the substance and reasons.
- As Executive Board ensure that, in the event of key appointments (and this not only means directors but also people responsible for implementation in practice, such as team leaders),

candidates are competent as regards displaying this exemplary behaviour and putting it into practice.

- Make sure that the HHS, as a public education institution, has an unambiguous and explainable policy as regards the accommodation of expressions of culture and/or religion(s) in daily practice. Examples are holy days, food, etc.
- Organise a discussion of educational innovation in relation to the current and future student population in the light of their chance of success.
- Check whether the structure of the HHS as an organisation corresponds to the above recommendations.

### 9.3. Recommendations at academy/programme level

Translate the tone and spirit of the above to academy/programme level:

- Also focus on the *profession*: how can the profession to which the programme channels be made 'diversity proof? That has to be binding and conclusive. The focus is on the question of whether a professional profile still applies, on curriculum and competencies, on teaching material, literature and casuistry. For staff and, particularly, teachers the focus is also on how you can manage this content properly in a mixed classroom. Above all, the latter demands intercultural sensitivity and skills. With this in mind an inspiring procedure needs to be devised together with staff.
- Do this with a mixed group; do not forget in this context the role of the course committee and - if there is none - make explicit approaches to ethnic minority students.
- Organise an 'out of the windows', meaning a study of how things are tackled by comparative programmes, or very different programmes at the HHS (MWD and CE colleagues could, quite surprised, ask each other how 'the other' tackled matters during the discussion of the survey results).
- The following suggestion is worth investigating with a view to preventing discrimination complaints by investigating these carefully at the earliest opportunity and by organising a dialogue. Train a number of native Dutch and ethnic minority students in proper mediation as regards this difficult issue. They can be deployed as *mixed* duos if there are signs of discrimination. Or students can approach them if they need help in difficult situations. This could also be a way of fulfilling the desire to close the still large gap in age and position between students and confidential advisers (survey by Tiel and De Mol).
- Work actively as managers to restore the confidence of staff, particularly ethnic minority staff, as regards the 'active monitoring of managers to prevent discrimination'. In the survey, not one ethnic minority member of staff indicated that they had seen managers actively monitoring to prevent discrimination (neither at MWD or CE). In the discussions, MWD staff in particular indicated that they felt unprotected in discrimination situations.

### 9.4. Recommendations for MWD

- For MWD it particularly applies that progress can be made as regards control and the clarity of personnel policy. This offers security to staff and averts situations in which discrimination can crystallise. Clear control by staff also offers security to students. This means teachers who are consistent regarding the rules applied on issues which are currently dealt with on the basis of a lot of freedom as regards interpretation and therefore space for (a feeling of) unequal treatment.



- This structure and solidity must be supported by solidarity. The question is what do we do as MWD to ensure that all staff and students feel at home and welcome. So that no-one has to continue to fight for recognition. For staff and, to a certain degree, students this may mean 'small' changes such as taking account in the timetable of holy days, etc.
- However, the main task will be to reassess the content of the programme and above all the method of working in the classroom to recreate a constructive learning climate for students with teachers who have a clear vision of what should feature in an intercultural programme and why. Including the skills for working on this with students.
- Explore, as management of the academy/programme, how this task should be dealt with in order to work on diversity and discrimination at MWD (and the other programmes).
- Develop a shared strategy as to how - given the existing polarisation - the desired reassessment with staff and students can be given substantive form and how staff can acquire the corresponding skills. It is essential that employees and students themselves also start taking responsibility for the quality of their own learning and work climate.