4 The science of inclusion and inclusivity

Bernadette Albert and Ruth Dowson

This chapter will cover

- ☐ The social science and theoretic underpinnings behind inclusion concepts
- ☐ Intersectionality and its relevance to inclusivity
- ☐ Barriers to inclusivity: Systemic Barriers, Cultural Barriers, Structural Barriers
- ☐ Power dynamics in cultural interactions and the impact on inclusion
- ☐ Privilege in cultural interactions and the impact on inclusion
- ☐ The relationship between cultural diversity and cultural risk management

Overview of inclusion and inclusivity

The concept of inclusion and inclusivity, (or social inclusion) dates back to 380 BCE where Plato in his works/forms 'The Unity of the Soul and the Good', 'The Symposium', 'The Pursuit of Beauty', 'Political Unity in the Republic, and 'Parmenides' (Plato, 2008) philosophises on the notion that the best societies are ones in which difference is acknowledged. Plato argued that this should not be the basis of the structure of society, but instead, what should take precedence was an awareness of the interconnectedness of humanity. In contemporary times, the concept emerged again within French policy discourse in the mid-1970s (Rawal, 2008). By the late 1980s the concept took hold, and expanded more broadly across Europe and North America, where it began to take precedence over the traditional social policy focus. These social policies shaped by governments were rooted in the belief that the state was obligated and had a responsibility to take care of its citizenry, particularly those who were considered to be vulnerable. Thus, the underpinning construct of social inclusion was initially