



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Practice

Guidance for Managers and Heads of Department

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Introduction and Objectives

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) are something we talk about a lot in terms of policy, and steps to make Lancaster University a more inclusive environment where everyone is afforded equal opportunity.

But what does EDI mean in practice? This session will touch upon some key topics that arise in day-to-day work:

- The responsibilities of an employer, line manager and institution with regards to implementing EDI in the workplace;
- What good practice and poor practice can look like, and the impacts they can have;
- The importance of trust, respect, confidentiality and consent when talking about these matters with your team members.

This workbook has been created to provide you with a guide to some of the terminology that is frequently discussed in conversations about EDI, and also to provide information on some of Lancaster University's policies that might be useful in the future.

Why does EDI Matter?

There are lots of reasons why as a university, and as individuals, EDI is something we ought to promote and take seriously. Just some of these are:

- Considering EDI increases the likelihood of everyone being treated equally, with respect, and without fear of discrimination.
- Legally, the University has an obligation to ensure that every individual has equal opportunities, and to have safeguards in place to eliminate discrimination and victimisation (against staff, students and visitors).
- Thinking about EDI also allows the University to meet its legal requirement to foster good relations between different groups e.g. to reduce prejudice, promote understanding and build awareness etc.

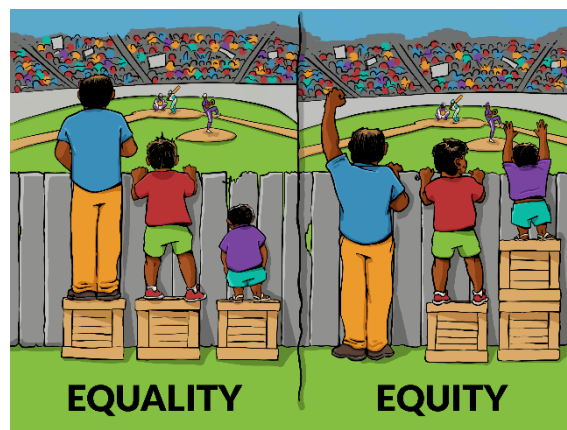
What is Equality?

Equality is about ensuring that everyone is treated fairly. It is about having the same opportunities in life, regardless of sex, gender, gender identity, race, disability, sexual orientation or other 'protected characteristics'. Engaging with others and learning about equality, diversity and inclusion can help us to become aware of our 'blind spots', our **unconscious biases**, or the stereotypes that we might unknowingly let affect the ways we approach different situations. Sometimes, we carry pre-conceptions about different people without even realising it.

Equality vs. Equity

Equality is sometimes used interchangeably with 'equity', and this latter term is usually used to indicate that equality *doesn't* mean that everyone should be treated exactly the same. Sometimes, different solutions are needed to make sure that everyone has the same opportunity based upon the barriers that they are facing to inclusion.

The cartoon below shows the difference between these two terms. When we focus only on equal treatment, we're not recognising that a one size fits all approach might still leave some people unable to access the same opportunities. In EDI, we use the label of 'equality' but we're aiming to achieve something that looks more like the right-hand side of this picture.



What is Diversity?

Diversity is about respecting and celebrating individual difference. In a work context, diversity is ensuring that the way we do things respects everyone and allows them to contribute to the University. Like equality, diversity does not mean we should treat everyone the same, rather it means we should value and respect the differences between individuals and ensure that the University is a welcoming and inclusive place for everyone.

The Equality Act 2010 and Protected Characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination both in the workplace, and in wider society.

For public sector employers (such as Universities), the Equality Act 2010 not only sets out the Equality Law that all individuals and employers must abide by, but also a specific **Public Sector Equality Duty** which regulates how public bodies must consider EDI in their day-to-day work (such as in designing policies, and in relation to their own employees).

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires that we:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;
3. Foster good relations between different people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

What does this mean in practice?

You don't need to memorise the PSED, but it is good practice for you to consider whether policies, ways of working, service design etc and team management are as inclusive as possible. This could look like:

- Being open and receptive to feedback relating to potential barriers that individuals might be facing, and working together to thinking of ways to mitigate those barriers.
- Working to support disabled employees and ensuring that they have appropriate reasonable adjustments in place that will ensure they are not disadvantaged at work.
- Thinking about the potential effects of changes to your team's duties, or ways of working, on individuals in protected characteristic groups and mitigating (where possible) any potential for adverse impact on one group.

As with the discussion of equality, the PSED does not require everyone is treated exactly the same way. In some cases, as we'll see, the PSED may mean treating some people in a way that might appear more favourable to others. However, this favourable treatment is not, in fact, an advantage, but is a way of ensuring equality of opportunity.

What are 'Protected Characteristics'?

The Equality Act 2010 sets out nine 'protected' characteristics. The 'protected' element refers to the fact that discrimination in relation to an individual's membership of any of the following groups is prohibited under the Act. The characteristics are therefore those which are explicitly protected by the Equality Act 2010.

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Reasonable Adjustments in the Workplace

Reasonable adjustments are changes an employer might make to remove or reduce a disadvantage related to someone's disability. For example:

- Making changes to the workplace.
- Improving the recruitment process so a candidate can be considered for a job.
- Changing someone's working arrangements.
- Providing equipment, services or support.

Employers must make reasonable adjustments to make sure workers with disabilities, or physical or mental health conditions, are not substantially disadvantaged when doing their jobs. This applies to all workers, including trainees, apprentices, contract workers and business partners.

It might not be that an employee knows exactly what reasonable adjustments would work for them. In these situations, you can often find suggestions online, support through other community members with similar barriers, and by talking with the EDI Team, who can facilitate and advise.

Reasonable Adjustments can also evolve over time, as a person's disability or health condition worsens, improves, or just changes. It's important to give your employees the opportunity to discuss changes with you on a regular basis, to enable them to access their role fully throughout their career.

Some useful websites to learn more about Reasonable Adjustments are:

- [Careers with Disabilities](#)
- [ACAS: Reasonable Adjustments in Practice](#)
- [Business Disability Forum: Condition and Disability Factsheets](#)

Talking about Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Managing a team, or perhaps even being a trusted friend or colleague, might mean that sometimes, you're approached by team members, colleagues or students who would like to discuss something which relates to EDI. This could be: a disclosure of a disability, seeking advice about transitioning or changing of preferred pronouns, raising a concern or letting you know that they have experienced racial discrimination at the University.

Many people express discomfort, or even fear, when faced with these scenarios, particularly if they don't consider themselves to be an expert on the topic or subject.

This discomfort might be due to a range of factors:

- Lack of understanding or personal experience with the topic being discussed
- Fear of 'saying the wrong thing'
- Feeling offended or attacked (even if indirectly) by the topic of discussion
- Fear of becoming emotional
- Worries about being supported by HR or specialists to offer the right guidance.

As a line manager, you are not expected to be an expert on all things EDI, nor are you expected to know immediately what the right course of action, resources to signpost, or advice to provide in these kinds of situations. However, there are a range of things that can help to both make sure that your staff feel supported, heard and taken seriously, and that you feel confident in approaching these kinds of scenarios.

Tips for EDI-based discussions

Conversations with employees can often contain elements of personal information which they are entrusting you with. Not everyone will be comfortable disclosing a disability or element of their life to you or their team, and pushing an employee to tell you something can often have the opposite effect, creating more barriers.

In the first instance, **confidentiality** and **consent** is key when sharing details of your employees with others.

Confidentiality: • Not sharing private or personal details with anyone who does not need to know. This can be verbally or in writing. • Don't discuss an employee or team member's personal life without their explicit permission. • Only share relevant information in these settings. Not everything is pertinent to a conversation.	Consent: • Each employee has ultimate say on who information is shared with about themselves. • If you need support from HR but don't have permission, discuss topics in general terms. • Consent can be withdrawn at any time.
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Whilst there's no 'right' answer or advice to give, and often you may not know what the topic of discussion is going to be, there are some things that employees and managers have said they've found particularly useful when having conversations about EDI. These tips are not prescriptive, and you might find that different ones are helpful in different situations.

Some examples are:

- Be comfortable asking to make notes if there are actions to take away, or questions and support you and your employee might need from other services.
- Be willing to sit with your own discomfort.
- Don't be afraid of saying that you want to check on the most appropriate policy/process but reiterate that you'll support them with the next steps.
- Don't try to persuade your colleague that their experience didn't really happen in the way that they're explaining it to you.
- If you don't know the policy or process, again, be honest about that and check that your colleague is happy for you to speak to your HR Partner/Advisor, or to seek further guidance elsewhere.
- Instead of telling the employee or your colleague what you're going to do, particularly if you're not sure of the most appropriate way to offer support, ask them 'what can I do to best support you with this?'.
- Listen to hear, not to respond.
- Offer to meet in whichever setting would be most comfortable for your colleague i.e. Teams or face-to-face. If you're having a face-to-face meeting, try to arrange this so that you can give your full attention to your colleague.
- Try to avoid placing your own 'spin' on what your colleague is saying – if they're reporting discrimination or victimisation this is particularly important.

Glossary of Terms and Definitions

Accessibility	The practice of making information, activities, and/or environments sensible, meaningful, and usable for as many people as possible.
Allyship	Active support for the rights of a minority or marginalized group without being a member of it. More details here .
Disability	A physical or mental condition that limits a person's movements, senses, or activities. More details here .
Diversity	The practice or quality of including or involving people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds and of different genders, sexual orientations, etc..
Equality	The state of being equal, especially in status, rights, or opportunities.
Equity	Recognizing that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and make adjustments to imbalances. More details here .
Ethnicity	Large groups of people classed according to common racial, national, tribal, religious, linguistic, or cultural origin or background.
Gender	The social, psychological, cultural and behavioural aspects of being a man, woman, or other identity. More details here .
Inclusion	The practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized, such as those who have physical or intellectual disabilities and members of other minority groups.
Intersectional	Relating to the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to an individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.
Microaggression	Indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group. More details here .
Positive Action	A range of measures allowed under the Equality Act 2010 which can be lawfully taken to encourage and train people from under-represented groups to help them overcome disadvantages in

	competing with other applicants. e.g.: Encouraging people from particular ethnic backgrounds to apply for jobs, but the decision on who to select being made on merit alone. e.g.: offering training or internships to help certain groups get opportunities or progress at work or hosting an open day specifically for under-represented groups to encourage them to get into a particular field.
Positive Discrimination	The unlawful practice or policy of favouring individuals belonging to groups regarded as disadvantaged or subject to discrimination. e.g. setting quotas or benchmarks in the recruitment process to take on a proportion of people from a protected characteristic group; e.g.: Hiring or promoting someone with a disability to increase the number of people with disabilities in the workforce, despite another candidate for the job being better qualified.
Prejudice	A preconceived (usually unfavourable) evaluation or classification of another person based on that person's perceived sex, gender identity, beliefs, ethnicity, disability, or other personal characteristics.
Privilege	A special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group.
Protected Characteristic	Aspects of a person's identity that makes them who they are. More details here.
Race	A category of humankind that shares certain distinctive physical or social qualities or traits.
Sex	Either of the two main categories (male and female) into which humans and most other living things are divided on the basis of their reproductive functions.
Sexuality	A person's identity in relation to the gender or genders to which they are typically attracted.
Tokenism	The practice of making only a perfunctory or symbolic effort to engage targeted communities. Often used in conjunction with 'Performative'.
Unconscious Bias	Making judgments or decisions on the basis of our prior experience, our own personal deep-seated thought patterns, assumptions or interpretations, and not being aware that we are doing it.

In a bit more detail:

Allyship

An effective manager should demonstrate proactive allyship for their employees and team. Allyship is the act of supporting and advocating for the rights of a marginalised group without being a member of it.

Nicole Asong Nfonoyim-Hara, the Director of the Diversity Programs at Mayo Clinic, describes Allyship as “when a person of privilege works in solidarity and partnership with a marginalized group of people to help take down the systems that challenge that group’s basic rights, equal access, and ability to thrive in our society.”

Allyship can be shown in a great many ways, such as:

- Being a safe person for your staff to speak to about issues they may be facing. Being both a point of information, as well as a compassionate listener.
- Supporting your staff indirectly by learning from those with lived experience, active bystander trainings, community events, and listening to their experiences, suggestions and concerns.
- Considering the impact of a new policy on employees who might be most disadvantaged, such as parents, disabled employees, or religious groups
- Working to educate your team on issues prevalent in their workplace, such as microaggressions, use of discriminatory language, or making the most of the range of training opportunities available to them.

Micro-aggressions

Micro-aggressions are subtle, and often unintentional forms of prejudice which are not as explicit as overt racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia or transphobia, or ageism. Micro-aggressions can often be presented as a passing remark, or a misjudged joke, but it is just as important that we are aware of these as it is to be aware of explicit forms of discrimination.

Examples of micro-aggressions include things like asking someone “where they’re really from” or saying “we’re all a little bit autistic” to an autistic individual.

Whilst micro-aggressions often aren’t meant to be offensive or insulting (though they can be intended) they still serve to ‘other’ the target individual or group. Micro-aggressions are even carried out by those who are explicitly very committed to equality, much like unconscious bias.

If you witness a micro-aggression, and it feels appropriate, you could perhaps have a quiet discussion with the individual who made the remark or acted a certain way and explain why what they said or did could be offensive. However, you should only do this if it feels safe and appropriate for you to do so.

There is a course available to staff on the topic of [bystander interventions](#). The course has been designed for students but contains some useful information for everyone about when you might consider intervening.

Disability

Disability is often thought of as being related to mobility, senses (like vision, hearing), or things which might be visible to others. This, though, represents only a proportion of disabled individuals. Disability can include conditions which are 'invisible' or episodic (meaning that they can fluctuate or come and go). Mental health conditions can also be considered a disability, if the effects of them are such that they are likely to last for more than 12 months and can affect the day-to-day lives of the individual.

Disability and Work

It is by no means true that disabled individuals can't be in employment. However, by law, employers must make reasonable adjustments to the work environment and working practices which mitigate any barriers that the disabled individual might face at work as a result of their disability. These can be things like allowing flexibility with deadlines, to accommodate the additional time that might be required to complete a piece of work or looking at changes to the place that an individual works if the lighting or technology is unsuitable.

As a line manager, you might be the first person that an employee talks to about their disability. It's important to show empathy, and also to avoid making judgements about what an individual can or can't do as a result of what they tell you. In fact, if you're thinking about the best way to support someone who is disabled in your team, whether they are a new member of staff or someone you have worked with for a long time, but who you've just discovered is disabled, the best way of finding out how to support them is to ask them if there is any support they would find helpful from you or from others.

At Lancaster, we're members of the [Disability Confident Scheme](#), and use the [Access to Work](#) programme.

LGBTQ+ Inclusion

The LGBTQ+ (sometimes written as LGBT+ or LGBTQIA+) community encompasses individuals with a range of different sexualities or sexual orientations, and gender identities. The full acronym stands for:

'L' – Lesbian

'G' – Gay

'B' – Bi or Bisexual

'T' – Trans

'Q' – This can be used to mean 'questioning' or 'queer'

'I' – Intersex

'A' – Asexual, Aromantic or Ace

You might have heard of other sexual orientations and gender identities in addition to those listed above, including Pansexuality, or Non-Binary.

To learn more about the meaning of some of these terms (and many more) you could look at [Stonewall's List of LGBTQ+ Terms](#).

Gender Identity

Gender identity is one's own internal sense of self and gender, whether that is man, woman, neither or both. Unlike gender expression, gender identity is not outwardly visible to others.

For most people, gender identity aligns with the sex assigned at birth. For transgender people, gender identity differs in varying degrees from the sex assigned at birth. A transgender man, for example, is someone who was listed as female at birth but whose gender identity is male.

There are also those who do not identify with either of the binary societal genders of man or woman. They may identify instead as non-binary, genderfluid, agender, or a range of other descriptors. Often non-binary people will consider themselves part of the Transgender community, as they often face the same prejudices and barriers.

Some people have never thought about their gender identity or can struggle with the concept of having a sense of gender which doesn't align with biological sex. Even if gender identity isn't something that you've thought about much, you should always try to respect other individuals' gender identities, using the pronouns and names that they indicate to you.

Pronouns

You've likely heard pronouns being discussed or have seen people indicate what their preferred pronouns are on email signatures, LinkedIn profiles, or perhaps in initial introductions in group settings. But what are pronouns, and how do you determine what pronouns to use for someone?

- We use gendered pronouns all the time to identify and refer to people. Describe people as 'she' or 'he' or even using 'it' for inanimate objects or collections of objects is something we learn early in our language acquisition.
- Some individuals though, don't identify as either of the binary societal genders 'man or woman', and instead have a non-binary gender identity. Non-binary individuals typically will use 'they/them', or 'ze/zir' pronouns. They may tell you that they prefer to use these pronouns or may just use them on email signatures.
- No one should ever be forced to share their personal pronouns, including you, but if you are comfortable in sharing the pronouns you use, or putting those in your email signature, that can normalise pronoun sharing amongst your team.
- Whilst sharing of pronouns doesn't eliminate the risk of assuming someone's gender based upon their name or appearance, it makes it clearer that you

understand what pronouns are and may make it easier for someone to tell you that they choose to use alternative pronouns.

- It's important to acknowledge, and to recognise the pronouns that individuals identify with, and to ensure that you try to use these.

Whilst the University doesn't have a policy on the use of pronouns specifically, Lancaster University Students' Union have a [policy on pronoun use](#). We also have a [policy on gender identity and expression](#) (often referred to as our Trans Equality Policy) and accompanying [guidance](#) and [FAQS](#).

Staff Networks

Our Staff Networks are invaluable both as a source of community and support for individual staff, but also in their willingness to help us reach groups of employees for feedback and consultation on a whole host of EDI work. We have five staff networks, and there are also two Allies networks, the [LGBTQIA+ Allies Network](#), and the Disabled Employees' Network Allies Group.

Our six staff networks, and the contact information for them is below:

- Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority Staff Network: baemnnetwork@lancaster.ac.uk
- Disabled Employees' Network: den@lancaster.ac.uk
- LGBT+ Staff Network: lgbtstaffnetwork@lancaster.ac.uk
- Parents' and Carers' Network: parentsandcarersnetwork@lancaster.ac.uk
- Womens' Network: women@lancaster.ac.uk
- Young Staff Network: youngstaffnetwork@lancaster.ac.uk

If you have any PG Research staff in your team, they may also be eligible to access support and resources from LUSU. For more information, get in touch at help@lancastersu.co.uk.

University Support and Advice

At Lancaster University we are committed to creating a fairer and more inclusive Lancaster for all of our staff, students and visitors, as well as our local community.

We are proud to have a fantastic team of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion experts, on hand to answer your questions and queries. If you have any questions about our Chartermarks, initiatives, values, policies or procedures, you can contact the below emails.

- EDI Advisors: edi@lancaster.ac.uk
- Athena Swan team: athenaswan@lancaster.ac.uk
- Race Equality Charter team: rec@lancaster.ac.uk
- Department [HR partners](#)

Alternatively, throughout the year Lancaster University hosts Stakeholder Forums and opportunities to have your say. Join the [EDI Stakeholders Teams Group](#) for regular updates and more information.

