



➤ EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Guidance on Language
and Terminology



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Introduction

When CIWM set up our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Working Group in 2021 and conducted Focus Groups on the topic of EDI, we heard a recurring theme – uncertainty about the correct or appropriate terminology can impede our intention and impact in this area. Most of us are worried that we'll say the wrong thing, which results in avoiding the conversations that we should be having on topics such as race, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability.

We would like to credit our South West Centre Council who started the ball rolling, by creating a Glossary of terms to support people, to create the right space for the healthy conversations. We have since conducted more research and have now created an updated Glossary for the sector, which includes over 145 words or phrases, which we hope are helpful to know and understand, to enable you to start important conversations around EDI.

We are aware that the terminology is changing and updating all the time and sometimes there are various terms that are being used simultaneously e.g. BAME, Ethnic Minority and BIPOC. In these cases, we have included all terms and given any recent update information, where available.

We would like to hear from our Membership about any words or phrases we may have missed, or which you think need amending or updating. We commit to review this list annually, to keep it as relevant as possible.

We have created the list both in Alphabetical order but also by EDI topic so that you can reference words either way. For a list of sources please see the reference page at the back of this guide.

We look forward to hearing from you and would love any feedback as to how you have used this tool via membership@ciwm.co.uk.



> Alphabetical contents

#-A	4	M-N	17
A	4	N-P	18
A-B	5	P	19
B	6	P-R	20
B-C	7	R	21
C-D	8	R-S	22
D	9	S	23
D-E	10	S-T	24
E-G	11	T	25
G	12	U-V	26
G-H	13	V-W	27
H-I	14	W-X	28
I	15	References	29
I-M	16		

> EDI topic

Topic	Page number
Age	4
Bias	4, 6, 8, 11, 15, 18, 26
Business Terms	8
Culture	7, 8, 10
Disability	4, 9, 16, 19, 21
Discrimination	9, 10
EDI Movement	4, 8
Gender	4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 16, 18, 23, 24, 25
General EDI term	4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 22, 24, 28
Legal	10, 13, 16, 27
Prejudice	19
Race	4, 10, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21, 28
Religion	21, 22
Sexual Orientation	18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25
Social Mobility	23



A



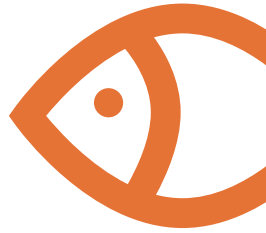
Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
#BlackLivesMatter	#BlackLivesMatter was founded in 2013 in response to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin's murderer. Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation, Inc. is a global organisation in the US, UK, and Canada, whose mission is to eradicate white supremacy and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes. The movement became UK headlines and gained further international attention during the global George Floyd protests in 2020 following his murder by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin.
#MeToo	The Me Too (or #MeToo) movement, with variations of related local or international names, is a social movement against abuse and sexual harassment where people publicise allegations of sex crimes.
Abelism	Ableism is prejudice against and/or unfavourable treatment of people with disabilities based on the belief that people without disabilities (known as able bodied) are superior.
Accessibility	The design, development or state of physical or digital environments, resources and services that are easy to reach, enter, use, see, etc. for all users.
Active bystander	A person who notices a problematic or harmful situation and takes steps to intervene, support, or report to prevent further harm.
Affinity bias	The tendency to connect with people who look and seem most like ourselves.
Affinity groups	A group of people who share the same interest or purpose such as gender, age, religion, race or sexual orientation. See also Employee Resource Groups.
Ageism	Age discrimination, also called ageism, is when someone is treated unfavourably because of their actual or perceived age.



A-B >



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Agender	Agender people do not consider themselves to have a gender.
Ally / Allyship	Someone who uses their privilege from being part of a dominant group to take action to challenge oppression by supporting and advocating with the oppressed/discriminated against group.
Asexual	Refers to a person who doesn't experience sexual attraction. This can be shortened to Ace, an umbrella term used to describe a variation in levels of romantic and/or sexual attraction, including a lack of attraction.
Atheism	Disbelief or lack of belief in the existence of a god or gods.
Attribution error	Using a false assumption to explain someone's behaviour.
BAME	BAME stands for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic. In 2021 the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities – a proposal was put forward that reflects the long-held sentiment that we need a new language for <u> talking about race </u> . In April 21, the thinktank British Future published a blogpost (Beyond BAME) looking at how people might like to be referred to instead. Its research found that most ethnic minority Britons slightly prefer “ethnic minority” as an umbrella term, with two-thirds (68%) saying they either support or accept the term and only 13% opposed. See also see also BIPOC and People of Colour and Ethnicity.
Belonging	The feeling of being accepted and included in a group or environment, contributing to one's sense of identity and well-being.



B



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
BI or Bisexuality	Bi is an umbrella term used to describe a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards more than one gender. Bi people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including, but not limited to, bisexual, pan, queer, and other non-monosexual identities.
Bi-gender	Bi-gender people experience two gender identities, either simultaneously or varying between the two. These two gender identities could be male and female, but could also include non-binary identities.
Bias	Attitudes for or against a person, group or concept especially in a way considered to be unfair.
Bicultural	Bicultural refers to having a combination of two distinct cultures. See also Multiracial.
Bigotry	The state of mind of a person (called a bigot) that is intolerant and prejudiced of ideas, races, ethnicities, genders, or religions that are different from their own.
Biphobia	Biphobia is fear, hatred, discomfort, or mistrust, specifically of people who are bisexual.
BIPOC	A term meaning “Black, indigenous, and people of colour”. This term emerged in 2020 as an alternative to “People of Colour” to highlight that Black and indigenous groups have unique experiences of racism. However, BIPOC receives some of the same criticism as People of colour for being too broad. See People of colour.
Bullying	There is no legal definition of bullying. However it is usually defined as behaviour that is intended to make someone feel intimidated or offended. It can be carried out by a group or an individual. It is usually understood to be repeated behaviour but can happen at a single event.



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Bystander effect / Apathy	The bystander effect is what happens when a person feels discouraged or is less likely to provide help to a person in distress (the victim of a crime or a bullying situation) because of the presence of other people. With the bystander effect, people assume someone else will step in and help and so no one does anything and the people who could have stepped in to help become a bystander.
Cancel culture	<p>Cancel culture is a social phenomenon where individuals, usually public figures or organisations, are boycotted, ostracised, or “cancelled” due to their perceived offensive or problematic actions or statements.</p> <p>This is often driven by public criticism and can be spread online, through social media platforms or in person.</p> <p>The aim is typically to hold these individuals or organisations accountable, though critics argue, it can lead to disproportionate responses and a lack of open dialogue.</p>
Cisgender	Someone whose gender identity matches the sex they were assigned at birth, for example a female who identifies as a woman.
Classism	The institutional, cultural, and individual belief system that assigns different values to people based on their socioeconomic level in society. This system typically assigns higher value to people from a high-income background and low-value to people from a low-income background.
Code-switching	The practice of changing one’s behaviour, language, or appearance to fit into the dominant culture or social group.
Coming out	When a person first tells someone/others about their identity as lesbian, gay, bi or trans.

C-D



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Confirmation bias	Seeking out or only noticing information that reinforces our existing beliefs.
Conscious prejudice	Preconceived, usually negative, feelings towards people because of a group they belong to, like religion, race, ethnicity or age.
Corporate Social Responsibility	A corporate business's responsibility to create a positive impact in its wider community. This includes requirements that are self-imposed and legally mandated.
Crossdresser	Crossdresser is a term to describe people who dress in clothes associated with their opposite sex, as defined by socially accepted norms, but who identify with the gender that matches their sex assigned at birth.
Cultural competence	The ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with people across cultures, respecting their cultural differences.
Cultural messaging	The social messages in a society that shape our beliefs, attitudes, and opinions of ourselves and others.
Culture fit	Alignment between an individual's attitudes, values, behaviors, and beliefs and an organisation's core values and culture. Widely considered problematic in hiring and performance assessment as it favors people who "fit" the dominant culture norms, derailing efforts to diversify.
DEI	An acronym that stands for diversity, equity, and inclusion. Variations can also include B for belonging and J for justice.
Digital accessibility	The practice of making digital products and environments accessible to all users, including those with disabilities. This term has become more prevalent with the increased reliance on digital platforms for work, education and social interaction.



D >



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Dignity	A value owed to all humans, to be treated with respect.
Disability	Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
Discrimination (direct)	Discrimination (direct) is where a member is treated less favourably than another in the same or similar situation on the basis of one, or more, of the protected characteristics.
Discrimination (indirect)	Discrimination (Indirect) is where a rule of practice is applied to all but has the effect of disadvantaging a particular group of people compared to others outside the group. There are occasions when the rule or practice is needed to achieve a legitimate aim and the means of achieving the aim, are appropriate and necessary.
Discrimination by association (associative discrimination)	Discrimination by association (a form of direct discrimination) is the act of discriminating against an individual because of an association with another person who has a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. However, this does not include the protected characteristics of marriage and civil partnerships, and pregnancy and maternity.
Discrimination by failing to make reasonable adjustments	Reasonable adjustments remove or minimise disadvantages experienced by people with disabilities. What is reasonable will depend on the circumstances of each individual case and failing to make reasonable adjustments may be discrimination.

D-E



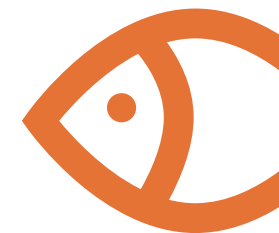
Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Discrimination by perception (perceptive discrimination)	Discrimination by perception (a form of direct discrimination) is the act of discriminating against an individual based on the perception that the individual has a protected characteristic. However, this does not include the protected characteristics of marriage and civil partnerships, and pregnancy and maternity.
Diversity	The presence of differences within a given setting, including race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, nationality, socio-economic status, language, (dis)ability, age, religious commitment, or political perspective.
Dominant culture	The most common cultural practice where multiple cultures also exist. This might be a language in a country, a tradition in a geographic region or a set of social norms in a workplace.
Employee Resource Group (ERG)	A largely voluntary, employee-led group that promotes a diverse and inclusive workplace aligned with organisational goals and objectives. See also Affinity Groups.
Equality	Equality is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents, and believing that no one should have poorer life chances because of where, what or whom they were born, or because of other characteristics. Equality recognises that historically, certain groups of people with particular characteristics e.g. those of certain races, disabled people, women, gays and lesbians, have experienced discrimination.
Equality Act	The Equality Act 2010 provides the legal framework to protect the rights of individuals with protected characteristics and to advance equality of opportunity.



E-G



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Equity	Working toward fair outcomes for people or groups by treating them in ways that address their unique advantages or barriers.
Ethnic minority	It has been widely agreed in the UK that a different term to BAME should be used and research by Think Tank Britain's Future found that most ethnic minority Britons slightly prefer "ethnic minority" as an umbrella term, with two-thirds (68%) saying they either support or accept the term and only 13% opposed. See Also BAME, BIPOC, People of Colour,
Ethnicity	A social construct which divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as values, behavioural patterns, language, political and economic interests, history, and ancestral geographical base.
Ethnocentrism	The tendency to believe that your own ethnic group is centrally important and measure all others using the standards and customs of your own.
Eurocentricity	Eurocentricity (synonym to eurocentrism) is a worldview that is centred on Western civilization or a biased view that favours it over non-western civilizations. It relates to whiteness.
Fatphobia/anti-fat bias	This term is used in discussions about body positivity, health and social justice, as well as in the media and public health initiative.
Feminism	The advocacy of women's rights on the basis of the equality of the sexes.
Gaslighting	A form of abusive manipulation that causes the victim to question their own reality.



G



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Gay	Gay refers to a man who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men. Also a generic term for lesbian and gay sexuality. Some women define themselves as gay rather than lesbian.
Gender	Gender is often expressed in terms of masculinity and femininity, is largely culturally determined, and is assumed from the sex assigned at birth.
Gender-critical	A perspective that centres around the belief that gender is determined by biological sex and that the acknowledgment of gender identity should not override the importance of sex based rights and protections. This term is often used in discussions about transgender rights and feminism.
Gender dysphoria	Used to describe when a person experiences discomfort or distress because there is a mismatch between their sex assigned at birth and their gender identity. This is also the clinical diagnosis for someone who doesn't feel comfortable with the sex they were assigned at birth.
Gender expression	Gender expression is how a person chooses to outwardly express their gender, within the context of societal expectations of gender, for example, feminine or masculine clothing, hair, name, mannerisms etc.
Gender fluid	Gender fluid is not having a fixed sense of gender identity or expression.
Gender identity	Gender identity is a person's sense of their own gender, whether male, female, or something else.
Gender non-conforming	Refers to the appearance or behavior of a person who does not conform to cultural or social norms relative to the social gender of their assigned sex.



G-H



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Gender privilege	Gender privilege usually refers to male privilege, meaning a set of unearned advantages granted to men on the basis of their gender.
Gender reassignment	Gender reassignment is a way of describing a person's transition towards the gender with which they identify. Gender reassignment can include undergoing some sort of medical intervention, changing names, pronouns, dressing differently and living in their self-identified gender.
Gender Recognition Certificate	Gender recognition certificate (GRC) This enables trans people to be legally recognised in their affirmed gender and to be issued with a new birth certificate. Not all trans people will apply for a GRC and you currently have to be over 18 to apply. You do not need a GRC to change your gender markers at work or to legally change your gender on other documents such as your passport.
Glass ceiling	A metaphorical barrier that prevents certain individuals, particularly women and minorities, from advancing to higher-level positions, despite qualifications.
Groupthink	The practice of thinking or making decisions as a group in a way that discourages creativity or individual responsibility.
Halo Effect	The halo effect refers to the tendency to allow one specific trait or our overall impression of a person, company or product to positively influence our judgment of their other related traits.

H-I



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Harassment	Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It may also involve unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or be related to gender reassignment or sex. The conduct can either be a serious one-off event or be a 'course of conduct', i.e. it happens on a number of occasions.
Health inequalities	The preventable differences in health status between groups, populations or individuals that arise from the unequal distribution of social, environmental and economic conditions within societies. These inequalities can determine the risk of people getting ill, their ability to prevent sickness, or opportunities to act and access treatment, when ill health occurs.
Heteronormative	Heteronormative is the idea or attitude based on the understanding that heterosexuality is the only normal and natural expression of sexuality.
Heterosexual	Refers to a man who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards women or to a woman who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards men.
Homophobia	The fear, hatred, discomfort with, or mistrust of people who are lesbian, gay, or bisexual.
Homosexual	This might be considered a more medical term used to describe someone who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards someone of the same gender. The term 'gay' is now more generally used.
Identity	The characteristics and qualities of a person, considered collectively, and regarded as essential to that person's self-awareness.



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Implicit bias	Unconscious attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions.
Imposter syndrome	A psychological pattern in which an individual doubts their contribution to their accomplishments and has a persistent internalised fear that they will be exposed as a “fraud”.
In-group bias	The tendency to respond more positively to people from our in-groups than we do to people from our out-groups.
Inclusion	The culture and feeling that everyone is free to be themselves, that a mix of people can bring their whole selves to work and feel comfortable and confident to be themselves. Inclusion will ensure that everyone feels valued and importantly, adds value.
Indigenous (First peoples, Native peoples)	Any group of people who are historically and ancestrally native to a specific region.
In-group bias	The tendency to respond more positively to people from our in-groups than we do to people from our out-groups.
Institutional racism	Rules, policies, and treatment within an institution (school, hospital, courthouse, etc.) that discriminate on the basis of race.
Intergenerational	The interaction, involving of or relating to people of different age categories or generations.
Intersectional / Intersectionality	The intertwining of social identities such as gender, race, ethnicity, social class, religion, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity, which can result in unique experiences, opportunities, and barriers.

I-M



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Intersectional environmentalism	A framework that advocates for the protection of both people and the planet, acknowledging the ways in which social injustices and environmental issues are interconnected. It emphasises inclusivity and diversity within the environmental movement.
Intersex	A term used to describe a person who may have the sex characteristics of both sexes or whose sex characteristics do not fit with societal assumptions about what constitutes male or female.
Invisible disability (Hidden disability)	An umbrella term that refers to a physical, mental, or neurological disability a person can have that is not visible from the outside.
Lesbian	Refers to a woman who has a romantic and/or sexual orientation towards women.
LGBT+	This means Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender. The + includes Queer, Questioning, Intersexed, Asexual, Agender and Ally.
Marginalisation	Treatment of a person, group or concept as insignificant or pervasive and places them outside of the mainstream society.
Marriage and Civil partnership	Marriage is defined as a 'union between a man and a woman'. Same-sex couples can have their relationships legally recognised as 'civil partnerships'. Civil partners must be treated the same as married couples in a wide range of circumstances, such as employment, education, service provision and housing. Failure to do so would amount to discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation.
Micro affirmations	Micro affirmations are small and often subtle actions of inclusion that give the receiver a feeling of being valued and a sense of belonging. These can be as small as making eye contact or acknowledging an accomplishment.

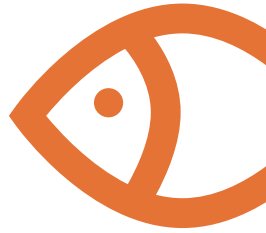


M-N



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Microaggressions	Everyday, subtle, intentional or unintentional interactions or behaviours that communicate some sort of bias toward historically marginalised groups. These everyday slights and exclusions can be verbal (jokes, quips or banter) or non-verbal (staring, facial expressions e.g. eye rolling).
Minority group	A group of people who experience relative disadvantage as compared to members of a dominant social group.
Misogyny	Hatred, contempt, and prejudice against women.
Multiculturalism	The practise of acknowledging and respecting the various cultures, religions, languages, social equity, races, ethnicities, attitudes, and opinions within an environment. The theory and practice promote the peaceful coexistence of all identities and people.
Multi-generational workforce	A group of employees that includes people from multiple generations. This can include people from generations such as baby boomers, Generation X, millennials and Generation Z. As people live longer and more people choose to work past retirement, the age diversity in the workplace is at its widest point in modern history.
Multiracial, mixed heritage, dual heritage, mixed-race, mixed-ethnicity – or simply “mixed”	Terms describing a person who has parentage or ancestors from more than one ethnic and/or racial group. Note that some people can get confused between interracial and biracial. An individual can be described as biracial if their heritage is mixed; interracial, on the other hand, is used to describe relationships or interactions between individuals from different racial groups.
Neuro-affirmative	An approach that respects and embraces neurodiversity as a natural and valuable variation of human cognition. This term is commonly used in discussions about autism and other neurodivergent conditions.

N-P



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Neurodiverse	The concept that there is great diversity in how people's brains are wired and work and that neurological differences should be valued in the same way we value any other human variation.
Non-binary	Non-binary is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity doesn't sit comfortably within the binary categories of 'female' or 'male'. Non-binary people may feel both male and female, something in between, or not either. They may have a gender identity that changes over time or they may not relate to gender at all.
Oppression	Being unjustly treated either at an individual or systematic level.
Othering	Treating a person or group of people as different and usually inferior because they don't fit in the dominant culture. Othering creates an us-versus-them dynamic that excludes someone who is different.
Out-group bias	The tendency to view people from outside our own group as less similar and, as a result, have negative biases against them.
Outing	The act of revealing someone's sexual orientation or gender identity to an individual or group without the person's consent or approval.
Pansexual	Refers to a person whose romantic/sexual attraction to others is not limited by the sex assigned at birth, gender or gender identity.
People of colour (POC)	An all-encompassing term for any group that isn't white. See also BIPOC.
Performative allyship	Actions by individuals or organisations that appear to support marginalised groups, but are primarily motivated by a desire to appear socially or politically correct, rather than a genuine commitment to change.



P >



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Positive action	Lawful actions that seeks to overcome or minimise disadvantages that people who share a protected characteristic have experienced, or to meet their different needs (e.g. providing mentoring to encourage staff from under-represented groups to apply for promotion).
Positive discrimination	Treating someone with a protected characteristic more favourably to counteract the effects of past discrimination. It is generally not lawful although the duty to make reasonable adjustments is an exception where treating a disabled person more favourably may be required by law, so it is legitimate to provide reasonable adjustments which favour of a disabled person.
Prejudice	Judging someone without knowing them, on the basis of what they look like or what group they belong to, e.g. all black people are good dancers.
Privilege	One or a set of unearned benefits someone has solely because of their membership in a specific group. These groups are identity based and include race, gender, sexual orientation, ability and religion, as well as privilege related to wealth and class.
Pronoun	Words we use to refer to people’s gender in conversation – for example, ‘he’ or ‘she’. Some people may prefer others to refer to them in gender-neutral language and use pronouns such as they/their. Note that most see their pronouns as just that, not their “preferred” pronouns.
Protected characteristics	Protected characteristics are aspects of a person’s identity that make them who they are. These are the grounds upon which discrimination is unlawful as stipulated in the Equality Act 2010. The characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

P-R



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Psychological safety	Psychological safety, a term coined and defined by Harvard Business School professor Amy Edmondson, is interpersonal trust that makes individuals feel they won't experience negative repercussions for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns or mistakes.
Qualified right	A right that can be restricted in circumstances where it is in the interest of the wider community, for example, the right to freedom of expression.
Queer	Queer is a term used by those wanting to reject specific labels of romantic orientation, sexual orientation and/or gender identity. It can also be a way of rejecting the perceived norms of the LGBT community (racism, sizeism, ableism etc). Although some LGBT people view the word as a slur, it was reclaimed in the late 80s by the queer community who have embraced it.
Questioning	The process of exploring your own sexual orientation and/or gender identity.
Quiet quitting	The act of an employee doing the minimum requirements of their job and putting in no more time, effort or enthusiasm than absolutely necessary. This has created discussions on workplace inclusion and employee well-being.
Race	Race includes a person's skin colour, their nationality, their ethnic origin and their national origin. A person's nationality is their citizenship of a particular nation e.g. British. A person's national origin is their connection to a country or nation through birth. A person's ethnic origin is the ethnic group to which they belong. This group share the same history and cultural traditions such as speaking the same language, or having the same religion.



R >



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Racial profiling	The act of suspecting, targeting, and discriminating against a person based on their race or ethnicity and using negative racial stereotypes to justify the suspicion that a person has or is likely to commit a crime.
Racism	Racism is where behaviour, policies, rules etc. result in unfair advantage to some people and unfavourable or harmful treatment of others based on race. These results can be prejudicial, discriminatory and antagonistic.
Racist	<p>Treating someone unfairly because of their race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins.</p> <p>A person is racist if they believe that their race makes them better than people of other races and who does or says unfair or harmful things as a result. A person can have racist thoughts, say something racist, or behave in a racist way without consciously subscribing to the idea that their race makes them better or that other races are inferior. These actions can be due to unconscious bias which is defined below.</p>
Racist and religious hate crime	An incident is a racist or religious hate crime if the victim or anyone else thinks it was carried out because of hostility or prejudice based on race or religion.
Reasonable adjustment	Reasonable adjustments remove or minimise disadvantages experienced by disabled people. In the workplace, the term means that employers must make reasonable adjustments to make sure people with disabilities, or physical or mental health conditions, aren't substantially disadvantaged when seeking employment or doing their jobs. This applies to all workers, including trainees, apprentices, contract workers and business partners. What is reasonable will depend on many factors including the disability, how practicable the changes are, the size of the association, and the cost of making the changes.

R-S

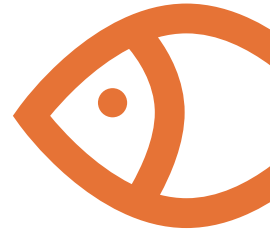


Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Religion	Religion refers to any religion, including a lack of religion. An organised system of faith and worship, such as Christianity, Islam and Judaism. This includes specific denominations or sects within a religion such as Methodists within Christianity, or Orthodox within Judaism.
Religious beliefs	Belief refers to any religious or philosophical belief and includes a lack of belief. Generally, a belief should affect your life choices or the way you live for it to be included in the definition.
Representation	The presence of diverse groups of people in various contexts, such as media, politics, and workplaces, ensuring that a broad range of experiences and perspectives are visible.
Respect	Taking into account the views and desires of others in how you treat people.
Romantic orientation	A person's romantic attraction to other people, or lack thereof. Along with sexual orientation, this forms a person's orientation identity. The term 'orientation' is often used as an umbrella term covering sexual and romantic orientations.
Safe space	An environment that provides the physical and emotional safety needed for people (often those from marginalised groups) to come together to communicate, express themselves and fully participate without fear of attack, ridicule, or denial of experience.



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Sex	A biological characteristic assigned to a person on the basis of primary sex characteristics (genitalia). Sex does not automatically determine gender identity.
Sexism	Prejudice or discrimination based on a person's sex or gender.
Sexual orientation	Sexual orientation is understood to refer to each person's capacity for profound emotional, affectional and sexual attraction to, and intimate and sexual relations with, individuals of a different gender or the same gender or more than one gender. Sexual orientation relates to the relationships people forge, and people can be associated with terminologies as heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual etc.
Silencing	When people from a dominant social group dominate discussions or spaces that silence or overpower the voices of minority social groups.
Social mobility	The change in a person's socioeconomic status over time, in relation to their parents or throughout their life. It can be measured by income, earnings, social class and well-being factors such as health and education. It can also refer to the relationship between a person's starting point in life and where they end up as an adult.
Socioeconomic privilege	One or a set of advantages held by a person or group because of their experience and their individual or family's social and economic status.

S-T



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Sponsor	A sponsor is a powerful internal advocate who looks after your interests, helps connect you to leaders and special projects, and amplifies your amazing work to other senior people in your business. The difference between sponsors and mentors is that mentors give guidance and advice but don't necessarily have the same influence to effect change that sponsors do.
Stereotype threat	Fear caused by the perceived risk of conforming to a stereotype about the social group you belong to.
Stereotypes	Thinking all people who belong to a certain group are the same and labelling them, e.g. all young people who wear hoodies are thugs and all effeminate men are gay.
Tokenism	Refers to the symbolic or performative practice of demographic diversity in spaces where people from marginalised communities aren't truly welcome or invited to fully participate. Their presence only serves to prevent criticism or give the illusion of diversity.
Tone policing	The action of dismissing or invalidating a person's point of view through criticizing the way a person says it, rather than the content of what they are saying.
Transgender	An umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. Transgender people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms including (but not limited to) transgender, transsexual, gender-queer (GQ), gender-fluid, non-binary, gender-variant, crossdresser, genderless, agender, nongender, third gender, bi-gender, trans man, trans woman, trans masculine, trans feminine and neutrois.



T >



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Transgender (trans) man	A term used to describe someone who is assigned female at birth but identifies and lives as a man. This may be shortened to trans man, or female-to-male (FTM).
Transgender (trans) woman	A term used to describe someone who is assigned male at birth but identifies and lives as a woman. This may be shortened to trans woman, or male-to-female (MTF).
Transitioning	The steps a transgender person may take to live in the gender with which they identify. Each person's transition will involve different things. For some this involves medical intervention, such as hormone therapy and/or surgeries, but not all transgender people want or are able to have this. Transitioning might involve things such as telling friends and family, dressing differently and changing official documents.
Transphobia	The fear or dislike of someone based on the fact they are transgender, including denying their gender identity or refusing to accept it. Transphobia may be targeted at people who are, or who are perceived to be, transgender. Transgender people may experience harassment or discrimination from people who are scared or uncomfortable with their identity. A person can have transphobic thoughts, say something transphobic, or behave in a transphobic way without consciously subscribing to the idea that they are transphobic. These actions can be due to unconscious bias which is defined below.
Transsexual	This was used in the past as a more medical term (similarly to homosexual) to refer to someone whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. This term is still used by some although many people prefer the term trans or transgender.

U-V



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Unconscious bias	Unconscious biases are social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness. Everyone holds unconscious beliefs about various social and identity groups, and these biases stem from one's tendency to organise social worlds by categorising. It is important to note that biases, conscious or unconscious, are not limited to ethnicity and race. Though racial bias and discrimination are well documented, biases may exist toward any social group. One's age, gender, gender identity physical abilities, religion, sexual orientation, weight, and many other characteristics are subject to bias. See also Bias.
Underrepresented Groups	Refers to a group whose members are disadvantaged and subjected to unequal treatment by the dominant group, and who may regard themselves as recipients of collective discrimination.
Universal design	The process of designing products, environments, programmes, services and experiences that are usable and accessible to as many people as possible. This would be regardless of age, abilities, disabilities, cultural background of other factors.
Values	Principles, beliefs, ideals or standards which act as general guides to behaviour or as points of reference in decision-making. These are closely connected to personal integrity and identity.



V-W



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
Victimisation	<p>Treating someone less favourably because they have been involved in a 'protected act', usually a discrimination or harassment complaint. The reason for the treatment does not need to be linked to a protected characteristic.</p> <p>A protected act is any action relating to discrimination under the Equality Act 2010 e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) making a claim or complaint of discrimination (under the Equality Act) b) helping someone else to make a claim by giving evidence or information c) making an allegation that you or someone else has breached the Equality Act d) doing anything else in connection with the Equality Act.
Visible and invisible disabilities	<p>Visible disabilities are those that can be easily observed or noticed, such as physical impairments, whereas invisible disabilities are not immediately apparent, such as chronic illnesses or mental health conditions.</p>
Vulnerable groups	<p>Individuals or communities that are more susceptible to be impacted by external factors. These factors can include physical, social, economic, environmental, historical, political, cultural or institutional. Examples of vulnerable groups are children, elderly, people with disabilities, women, racial minorities, LGBTGIA+ individuals, homeless people and migrants.</p>
White fragility	<p>A term coined by author Robin DiAngelo that refers to the discomfort and defensiveness some white people may experience when confronted with information that highlights racial inequity and injustice in our society.</p>
White privilege	<p>Societal privileges that benefit white people over non-white people, particularly if they are under the same social, political, or economic circumstances.</p>

W-X



Term	Common meaning in relation to EDI
White supremacy	White supremacy or white supremacism, is the racist belief that white people are superior to people of other races and therefore should be dominant over them.
Whiteness	It is an idea that constitutes and demarcates behaviours, feelings, knowledge, social practices, cultural formations, and systems that attributes white people as being superior.
Woke	Being woke means being aware... knowing what's going on in the community, alert to racial or social discrimination and injustice.
Workplace inclusion	An atmosphere or culture where all employees are valued, feel a sense of belonging, can contribute and can thrive. It requires deliberate and intentional action.
Xenophobia	Dislike of or prejudice against people from a different country than your own.



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