

# Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS



Diversity, equity, and inclusion isn't a test.  
You don't "get it right" to prove something.  
It's a human reality to embrace.

**Diversity, equity, and inclusion  
is about listening.**



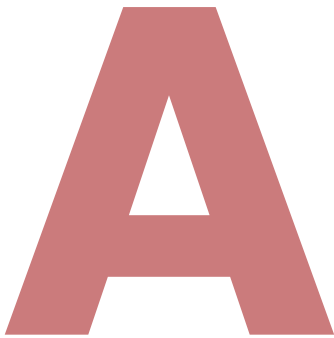


**Each of us has a unique perspective in navigating the world that is shaped by our experience, community, and culture. We can only understand one another if we're willing to listen and learn.**

**This glossary is our understanding of common language related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.**

**Words are as imperfect as people.  
They also evolve.  
And they will never be complete.**



**ABILITY**

Talent or skill in a particular area of expertise.

**ABLEISM**

Discrimination or prejudice that favors able-bodied people over disabled people.

**ACCESSIBILITY**

The quality of being easy to reach, enter, obtain, use, or understand, ideally in a way that does not discriminate. *E.g.* Lifts provide accessibility to those who can't easily use stairs.

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

The quality of taking responsibility for your actions, whether they're right or wrong.

**ACCULTURATION**

The process of assimilating to a different culture from your own, typically the dominant one.

**ADVOCATE**

The act of championing and supporting a cause both in public and in private. Also refers to a person who does this.

**AFFINITY GROUP**

A group of people with a common interest or goal. They might act together for a specific purpose or outcome.

**AGEISM**

Discrimination or prejudice on the basis of age.

**AGENDER**

Refers to someone who does not identify themselves with a gender.

**ALLYSHIP**

The condition of being an ally for a marginalized person or group; consistently advocating for and having a meaningful, supportive relationship with them.

**ANDROGYNE**

A person whose nature or appearance is neither clearly masculine nor clearly feminine.

**ANTI-RACIST**

Actively in opposition to racism.

**ANTI-SEMITISM**

Discrimination or prejudice towards Jewish people.

**APPROPRIATION**

The act of taking something such as language, clothing, or artifacts belonging to another person or group without permission or acknowledgement.

**ASEXUAL**

A person who does not feel sexual attraction.

**ASSIMILATION**

The process of becoming similar to something. Cultural assimilation is when a minority culture assumes the behavior and values of the dominant culture in a society (see also "Acculturation").

**AUTISM**

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a lifelong, developmental condition that affects how a person experiences the world and communicates and relates to others.





## **BAME**

A UK-specific term that stands for Black, Asian, and minority ethnic groups.

## **BENEVOLENT PREJUDICE**

The act of expressing or framing prejudices that reinforce oppression in a superficially positive way.

## **BIAS**

A tendency or inclination to be prejudiced against a person or group, especially in a way that is unfair.

## **BIGOTRY**

An unreasonable attachment to an intolerant or prejudiced belief, opinion, or camp.

## **BIPOC**

A US-specific abbreviation for Black, Indigenous, and people of color.

## **BIRACIAL**

Involving members of two races; or, having parents from two races.

## **BISEXUALITY**

Romantic or sexual attraction to both males and females, or to more than one gender.

## **CISGENDER**

A person whose gender identity corresponds to the sex they were assigned at birth.

## **CLASSISM / CLASS DISCRIMINATION**

Discrimination or prejudice against people who belong to a particular social class, often the working class.

## **COMMUNITIES OF COLOR**

Communities that hold a racial identity that describes shared racial characteristics.

## **CRITICAL RACE THEORY**

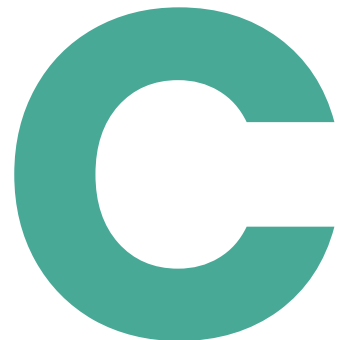
A cross-disciplinary movement examining the intersection of race, justice, and society, particularly in the US.

## **CROSS-CULTURAL**

Relating to different cultures or a comparison of them.

## **CULTURAL COMPETENCE**

The ability to interact and communicate effectively with people from other cultures.





### **DEADNAMING**

To call a transgender person by their birth name or pronouns after they have transitioned.

### **DIASPORA**

A population that has settled across regions outside their geographical place of origin.

### **DISABILITY**

Any condition of body or mind that affects people's ability to carry out everyday activities or to interact with their environment.

### **DISABLISM**

Prejudice, stereotyping or discrimination against a person with a disability.

### **DISCRIMINATION**

The unfair or biased treatment of specific groups on the basis of their shared characteristics, often relating to age, class, disability, gender, race, or sexuality.

### **DISENFRACTISEMENT**

When people or groups are deprived of a right or privilege, particularly the right to vote.



**DIVERSITY**

The practice of including people from a range of groups with different shared characteristics, such as age, class, disability, gender, race, and sexuality.

**DYSCALCULIA**

A difficulty in understanding numbers that can occur across all ages and abilities. Does not affect general intelligence.

**DYSGRAPHIA**

A difficulty in expressing oneself effectively in written form, including weaknesses in spelling and punctuation. Does not affect general intelligence.

**DYSLEXIA**

A difficulty in reading or interpreting words and letters. Does not affect general intelligence.

**DYSPRAXIA**

A difficulty with movement and co-ordination, such as tasks requiring balance. Does not affect general intelligence.





## **EMOTIONAL TAX**

The effects on health, wellbeing, and ability to succeed that occur when someone's identity is different from the people around them and they are on guard to protect themselves against potential bias.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM**

Racial discrimination in the creation and enforcement of environmental law, such as targeting ethnic-minority neighborhoods for the dumping of toxic waste.

## **EQUALITY**

The state of being equal to other individuals, especially in terms of opportunities, status and rights.

## **EQUITY**

The process of recognising inequality and making adjustments to overcome prejudice (including systemic bias) and its effects.

## **ESL**

English as a second language, as used by speakers of other native languages.

## **ESSENTIALISM**

The view that categories of people, such as women and men, have different basic characteristics that cannot be changed.

## **ETHNICITY**

The state of belonging to a social group that has a common racial, cultural or national identity.

## **ETHNIC MINORITY**

A cultural or racial group that is fewer in number than the dominant social group and has been disadvantaged due to their ethnicity.

## **EUROCENTRISM**

A tendency to interpret the world in terms of European or Anglo American values.

## **EXCLUSION**

A situation in which someone is prevented from participating in or withheld access to something.

## **FEMINISM**

The belief in and advocacy for the political, economic and social equality of the sexes. Is most commonly expressed through organized social and political activity on behalf of women's rights.

## **FETISHIZATION**

Sexualizing someone based on a specific aspect of their identity.

## **FIRST NATIONS**

Refers to various indigenous and aboriginal tribes from the North American continent, especially Canada.

# F





## **GENDER**

Refers to the socially constructed characteristics and traits of one sex.

## **GENDER CRITICAL**

A view or belief that someone's sex – whether they're male or female – is biological and immutable; their gender cannot be changed or be something different.

## **GENDER EQUALITY INDEX**

A measurement tool widely used within the European Union for assessing gender equality across different nations. Often abbreviated to GEI.

## **GENDER FLUIDITY**

Refers to the change that occurs over time in a person's gender expression or gender identity, or both.

## **GENDER IDENTITY**

How an individual perceives and labels their gender. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.

## **GENDER-NEUTRAL LANGUAGE**

The practice of using inclusive language that avoids bias towards a single gender or sex.

## **GENDER PRONOUNS**

A word used to refer to another person other than their name. These terms are usually used to reflect a person's gender identity (e.g. she/her).

## **GLASS CEILING**

A metaphor referring to the barrier that is often encountered by minorities and marginalized groups of people when seeking career advancements.

## **GNC**

Acronym for Gender nonconforming. A term used to refer to someone who expresses gender identity or cultural and psychological traits that are different to their biological sex.

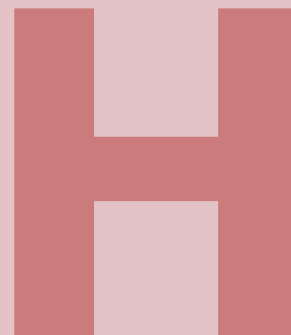


## **HETERONORMATIVITY**

The assumption that heterosexuality is the preferred sexual orientation.

## **HOMOPHOBIA**

Feelings of fear, hatred, discomfort, or mistrust towards members of the LGBTQI+ community.



## **IDENTITY-BASED VIOLENCE**

Any act of violence that is motivated by the perpetrator's perception of the victim's identity.

## **INCLUSION**

The action or state of including or of being included within a group, activity, or social structure.

## **INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE**

The practice of using language that avoids bias towards any single gender, sex, or minority group.

## **INTERNALIZED RACISM**

When an individual exhibits racial tendency toward people and cultures of their own race (including themselves).

## **INTERPERSONAL RACISM**

Racism that occurs between individuals.

## **INTERSECTIONALITY**

The theory that people can be marginalized or discriminated against based on a complex and interconnected set of social identifiers, including their gender, race, class, sexual orientation, and religion.

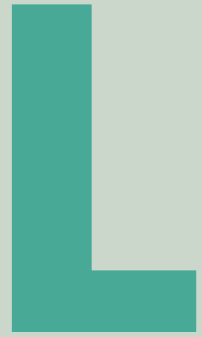
## **ISLAMOPHOBIA**

An unfounded fear of or hostility to Muslims, Islam, and Islamic culture. These beliefs can lead to violent, exclusionary, and discriminatory actions against Muslims.



## **LGBTQIA+**

A collective term that encompasses a range of genders and sexual identities, including people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual, agender, and community allies.



## **MANSPLAIN**

A pejorative term used to describe the way in which a man explains something to a woman, assuming she has no knowledge of the subject.

## **MARGINALIZATION**

When an individual or group is socially excluded and denied access to services or opportunities.

## **MATERNAL BIAS**

A form of unconscious bias in which mothers are assumed to be less committed or competent in the workplace. It can intensify existing performance biases against women.

## **MICROAGGRESSION**

Everyday behaviors and actions that communicate some form of bias against individuals from marginalized or non-mainstream groups.

## **MINORITY**

A culturally, racially, or ethnically distinct group of people that is subordinate to a more dominant social group within a community.



## **MISGENDER**

Addressing a person – usually an individual who identifies as transgender, nonbinary, or non-conforming – with an incorrectly gendered name, pronoun, or honorific.

## **MISOGYNY**

Hatred or strong dislike of women. It can manifest in the form of abuse, violence, or discrimination against women.

## **MODEL MINORITY**

A minority group that is stereotyped as high-achieving in some regard. The concept is problematically used to undermine the severity of socioeconomic disparities.

## **MULTICULTURAL**

An environment that is inclusive of different cultures, customs, and nationalities.

## **MULTIETHNIC**

Something that relates to or includes people of different ethnic groups; or, a person who identifies with two or more ethnicities.

## **MULTIRACIAL**

Something that represents or is composed of multiple different racial groups; or, a person who has two or more races within their genealogy.



# N

## **NEURODIVERSITY**

Encompassing and embracing variations in brain cognition and behaviour. Neurodiversity considers neurodevelopmental differences such as ADHD, dyslexia, and autism as normal and acceptable variations of the human brain.

# O

## **OBJECTIFICATION**

Seeing and/or treating someone like an object, without regard for their personhood or dignity. Usually refers to the sexual objectification of women.

## **OPPRESSION**

When a person or group is subjected to unjust treatment, over a prolonged time period, by an individual or group that holds more power.

## **PLATINUM RULE**

A variation of the golden rule (“treat others as you would wish to be treated”), which states: “Treat others as they want to be treated.”

# P

## **POC**

An umbrella term that stands for “people of color”. It refers to any person who does not identify as white.

## **PREJUDICE**

A preconceived opinion, especially of a negative nature, formed without thought for or knowledge of groups with particular characteristics, such as those based on race, gender, sexual orientation, or ethnicity.

## **PRIVILEGE**

A special advantage, right, or opportunity enjoyed by a person or specific group.



# Q

## **QUEER**

An umbrella term used to refer to any person who does not identify as heterosexual, heteroromantic, or cisgender.

# R

## **RACE**

A term used to categorize people based on shared physical and biological attributes. In modern sciences, race is considered a social construct that owes more to social concepts than physiology.

## **RACIAL MINORITY**

A racial group that is fewer in number than the dominant social group. Usually refers to groups that have been disadvantaged socioeconomically because of this.

## **RACISM**

Any prejudice or discrimination against, or hostility towards, a person or group on the basis of their ethnicity or race. Racism can be perpetrated by a person, community, institution, or system.





### **SAFE SPACE**

A place or environment intended to be free of bias, conflict, criticism, or potentially threatening actions, ideas, or conversations.

### **SEGREGATION**

The separation or isolation of a race, class, or minority group via the creation of physical, social, or educational barriers.

### **SEXISM**

Behaviors, conditions, and attitudes that are discriminatory or prejudiced on the basis of sex.

### **SEXUAL HARRASSMENT**

Sexual remarks or physical advances that are unwanted, inappropriate, offensive, or uncomfortable for the person receiving them.

### **SOCIALIZATION**

The continuous process of acquiring the social skills, cultural norms, and ideologies of a society. In turn, norms and dominant ideologies are gradually internalized.

### **SOCIAL JUSTICE**

The fair treatment of and division of resources, opportunities, and privileges amongst everyone in a society, including minority groups.

## **SPECTRUM (ON THE)**

A term commonly used to describe someone with signs of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Often used in a derogatory way to describe people with social awkwardness.

## **STEALTH**

A behavior where a person chooses to live solely as their gender without ever revealing that they are transgender, passing as their desired sex or gender at all times.

## **STEREOTYPE**

An unfair and oversimplified image that presents all people with a particular characteristic as the same.

## **STIGMATIZATION**

The act or process of negatively labeling someone based on a distinguishing characteristic such as a mental illness, health condition, or disability.

## **STRUCTURAL INEQUALITY**

A system of privilege created by institutions within an economy that systematically disadvantages certain groups and minorities. Often seen in business practices, law, education, and healthcare.

## **SKILLS-BASED HIRING**

The practice of hiring based on skills and performance rather than on formal qualifications such as a degree or work experience.



## **THIRD GENDER**

A term used to describe someone who does not identify as a male or female. They can be neither or a combination of both.

## **TOLERANCE**

Acceptance of behaviors and beliefs that conflict with or are different from one's own.

## **TOKENISM**

The practice of making only a symbolic effort to be inclusive to minority groups and give the appearance of equality and inclusion. "Token hires" give the superficial appearance of diversity.

## **TRANSGENDER**

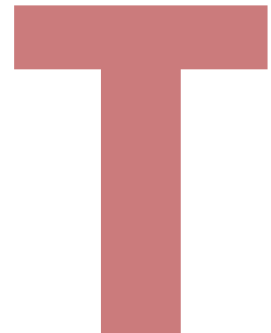
Having a gender identity that is different to the sex one was assigned at birth.

## **TRANSPHOBIA**

Irrational/prejudiced fear of, or aversion to, transgender people.

## **TRANSRACIAL**

Having a racial identity or expression that differs from one's race of birth; or, involving two or more races.

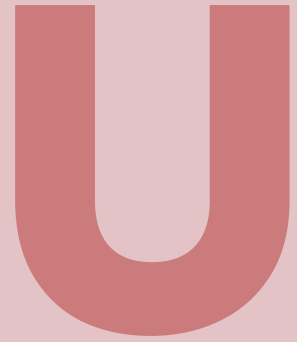




## UPWARD MOBILITY

Refers to the experience of moving up into a more privileged economic or social position in society.

*Eg. Being promoted to a high-paying position.*



## UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

The unconscious beliefs or prejudices, formed outside of our conscious awareness, that we create and hold about certain groups of people. Also referred to as “hidden bias” or “implicit bias”.



## VALUES FIT

The process of identifying and hiring candidates whose motivations and values match those of the company.

## WIMMIN

An intentional phonetic respelling of the word “women” that was adopted to avoid the use of the word 'men' at the end.



## XENOPHOBIA

Extreme dislike or fear of people from other countries, their customs, and other cultural traits.



# Spread the words.

Being an advocate isn't only about knowing definitions.

It's about taking action to embrace your growth edges  
and encouraging others to do the same.

Share our guide to support someone else's journey.

