



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - Glossary of Key Terms

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The EAUC has produced this glossary to educate and raise awareness of terminology relevant to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). It defines terms in ways which match the EAUC understanding and use of them and have been listed alphabetically. We are welcoming input, feedback, and suggestions from all staff and our network on an ongoing basis as this remains public resource that will be annually reviewed. Please note, this glossary is not exhaustive but aims to cover the most common features and terms that the EAUC encounters in relation to EDI. Sources are listed beneath the table.

TERM	DEFINITION
A-H	
<i>Ableism</i>	The intentional or unintentional discrimination or oppression of individuals with disabilities based on the belief that typical abilities are superior ^[1] .
<i>Accountability</i>	Ways individuals and communities hold themselves to their goals and actions, while acknowledging the values and groups to which they are responsible.
<i>Affinity Bias</i>	Relates to the tendency to gravitate towards those who look and seem most like us, which can result in becoming more likely to ignore the negative traits of people we like, as well as focus on the faults of those people we have not connected with ^[2] .
<i>Ageism</i>	Refers to two concepts: a socially constructed way of thinking about older persons based on negative attitudes and stereotypes about aging and a tendency to structure society based on an assumption that everyone is young, thereby failing to respond appropriately to the real needs of older persons ^[2] .
<i>Ally</i>	A person who is not a member of a marginalized or disadvantaged group but who expresses or gives support to that group
<i>Anti-oppression</i>	Recognising oppressions that exist in society and ways to mitigate their effects to equalise the power imbalance in communities.
<i>Anti-racism</i>	To actively oppose racism by advocating for political, economic, and social change.

<i>Anti-sectarianism</i>	The prevention of sectarianism, which is created over time through consistent social, cultural, and political habits, leading to the formation of group solidarity that is dependent on inclusion and exclusion.
<i>BAME</i>	This is the abbreviation of the term 'Black, Minority, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic.' BME is an abbreviation for black and minority ethnic. Both are umbrella terms used to refer to groups of people who identify as being from ethnicities of non-white descent, particularly those viewed as having experienced racism or who are marginalised in some way, as well as being in the minority. The term, however, has received criticism for being unrepresentative of all marginalised people of colour ^[3] .
<i>Bias</i>	A prejudice against groups or individuals that are not like yourself or showing preference for people that are like yourself ^[2] .
<i>BIPOC</i>	An acronym for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour ^[3] .
<i>Bullying</i>	Behaviour that is intended to hurt someone either emotionally or physically and is often aimed at certain people or groups.
<i>Bystander intervention</i>	The ability to recognise a potentially harmful situation or interaction and choosing to respond in a way that could positively influence the outcome.
<i>Carer or Caregiver</i>	A person who has total or partial responsibility to provide help and support to another person. This person could be a family member, friend, neighbour, or child, who needs care for any number of reasons (such as age, disability, illness).
<i>Cultural Appropriation</i>	Originally coined to describe the effects of colonialism, cultural appropriation entails adopting aspects of a minority culture by someone outside the culture, without sufficient understanding of its context or respect for the meaning and value of the original. Cultural appropriation done in a way that promotes disrespectful cultural or racial stereotypes is considered particularly harmful.
<i>Decolonisation</i>	The process of undoing colonising practices, confronting and challenging practices done in the past, which are still influential in the present today.
<i>DEIA</i>	Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility
<i>DIB</i>	Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging
<i>Dignity</i>	A value owed to all people that treats them with respect.
<i>Diversity</i>	The condition of being different or having differences. Differences among people with respect to age, class, ethnicity, gender, health, physical and mental ability, race, sexual orientation, religion, physical size, education level, job and function, personality traits, and other human differences.

EDI	EDI is an acronym for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion
Equality	Treating everyone the same and giving everyone access to the same opportunities ^[4] .
Equity	Creating fair access, opportunity, and advancement for people from under-represented groups.
Glass Ceiling	The barriers (real or perceived) to entry or promotion into a professional or educational institution or sector, which maintains a certain hierarchy that discriminates against persons or groups with minority or marginalised characteristics. This can apply to society at large or be given to more specific circumstances.
Harassment	Unwanted behaviour that is offensive, intimidating or humiliating. It can happen on its own or alongside other forms of discrimination.
Heterosexism	The assumption that heterosexuality is the social and cultural norm/default, as well as the prejudiced belief that heterosexual peoples are socially and culturally superior to LGBTQ+ peoples.
Homophobia	The irrational fear, dislike, hatred, aversion, intolerance, and ignorance of homosexuality and of LGBTQ+ individuals.
I-O	
Inclusion	The process of bringing people that are traditionally excluded into decision-making processes, activities or positions of power, and valuing differences as a source of strength, innovation, and performance, which creates a culture and behaviour of belonging. It enables individuals or groups to feel safe, respected, motivated, and engaged.
Indigenous peoples	Peoples in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest, colonisation, or the establishment of present state boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all their own social, economic, cultural, and political institutions ^[5] .
Intent vs Impact	Our intentions (what we want or hope to do) do not always align with what we say or do which can impact how others receive what one says and does.
Intersectionality	The intertwining of social identities like gender, race, ethnicity, social class, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity that causes unique opportunities, barriers, experiences, or social inequality.
Intersex	Refers to when a person's sex development is different to most other peoples. Sometimes the term Disorders of Sex Development is used, as is Variations in Sex Characteristics (VSC) or Diverse Sex Development; some adults and young people with DSD prefer to use the term intersex ^[6] .

<i>Latine/Latinx</i>	The gender-neutral alternative to Latina or Latino. It is a term used to describe a diverse group of people who have roots in Latin America.
<i>LGBTQ+</i>	Stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or sometimes questioning) and others. The 'plus' represents other gender identities and sexual orientations that are not specifically covered by the five initials.
<i>Lived experience</i>	The representation of the experiences and choices of a given person, and the knowledge that they gain from these experiences and choices. In the context of EDI, a lived experience can describe someone's account of discrimination or harassment that they have uniquely faced.
<i>Microaggression</i>	Daily behaviour (verbal or nonverbal) that communicates hostile or negative insults towards a group, either intentionally or unintentionally. This can also be described as 'covert' form of discrimination or harassment.
<i>Misogyny</i>	Sexist attitudes and ideologies formed because of prejudice and discrimination against women.
<i>Neurodiversity</i>	Where neurological differences are recognised and respected as any other human variation. These differences can include, among others: dyspraxia; dyslexia; attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); dyscalculia; autistic spectrum; Tourette's syndrome. This can also be termed <i>cognitive diversity</i> .
<i>Non-binary</i>	People whose gender is not male or female use many different terms to describe themselves, with <i>nonbinary</i> being one of the most common (sometimes spelled with a hyphen, as "non-binary"). Other terms include <i>genderqueer</i> , <i>agender</i> , <i>bigender</i> , <i>genderfluid</i> , and more. ^[7]
<i>Oppression</i>	Systemic and institutional abuse of power by a dominant or privileged group at the expense of targeted, less privileged, groups.
P-Z	
<i>Performance Allyship</i>	When an individual or group of power/majority/privilege profess(es) their actions in the name of 'allyship,' while actively conducting harm to, taking focus away from, and being unhelpful towards the group they claim to support, often to receive praise and attention, without taking critical action to dismantle the systems of harm. The term 'performative' can be used here to describe those actions.
<i>Positive action</i>	The practice of increasing opportunities to under-represented parts of society. Positive action involves taking targeted steps to address underrepresentation or disadvantage experienced by people with characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 ^[4] .
<i>Positive discrimination</i>	The practice or policy of favouring individuals belonging to groups known to have been discriminated against previously.

Prejudice	'Pre-judgement' Personal bias for or against anything, all humans have bias and prejudice.
Privilege	Systemic favouring, enriching, valuing, validating and including of certain social identities over others. Individuals cannot 'opt out' of systems of privilege; rather these systems are inherent to the society in which we live.
Pronouns	Words to refer to a person after initially using their name. Gendered pronouns include she and he, her and him, hers and his, and herself and himself. "Preferred gender pronouns" (or PGPs) are the pronouns that people ask others to use in reference to themselves. They may be plural gender-neutral pronouns such as they, them, their(s). Some people state their pronouns as a form of allyship.
Protected Characteristics	Used in the Equality Act 2010, the term describes the characteristics that people have in relation to which they are protected against discrimination and harassment. Under the Act, there are nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation ^[8] .
Queer	Beginning in the late 1980s, the label <i>queer</i> began to be <u>reclaimed</u> from its pejorative use as a neutral or positive self-identifier by LGBT people. Queer is primarily used to refer to any form of nonheteronormative gender, sex, and sexuality, as well as in contradistinction to more straightforward categories of sexual identification, such as lesbian, gay, and bisexual. While it serves as an umbrella term to include a broad range of sexual orientation and/or gender expression, numerous people to whom it might apply still consider queer a derisive and offensive term, especially when it is used by heterosexuals. ^[9]
Racism	Prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against someone based on their membership of a particular racial or ethnic group.
Reasonable adjustments	The steps taken to remove barriers faced due to disability or a health condition. These include short or long-term adjustments and are a legal obligation in the UK ^[10] .
Safe space	A place where people can feel confident and be comfortable expressing themselves without fear or exposure to discrimination, criticism, harassment or any other physical or emotional harm.
Sign Along	An alternative and augmentative keyword signing communication method used by those individuals with an additional speech, language, and communication need. It is also used in early years schools and groups.
Sign Language	A system of communication using visual gestures, facial expressions and signs, as used by deaf people and those communicating with limited hearing. Sign language is not universal, it differs between countries and regionally, however there are some similarities.
Social Justice	Active engagement toward equity and inclusion that addresses issues of institutional, structural, and environmental inequity, power, and privilege.

Stereotypes	Assumptions we make about people based on the social groups to which they belong.
Systemic	Something that affects the whole and not just parts of a system.
Tokenism	The practice of making only symbolic or superficial gestures to support a specific cause, group, or campaign with no efforts to offer or provide material support. This can be seen in any context, such as advertising campaigns, recruitment strategies, and interpersonal workplace interactions. See also the definition for <i>performance ally</i> .
Tolerance	The attitude of someone who is willing to accept someone else's beliefs, way of life, etc. without criticizing them even if they disagree with them.
Transgender	People whose gender identity is different from the gender they were thought to be at birth. "Trans" is often used as shorthand for transgender ^[11] .
Unconscious Bias	Refers to the unconscious associations and/or beliefs held by one individual that affects their behaviour or attitude towards another person or group. This can lead to negative or positive outcomes, but largely increases risk of stereotyping. Unconscious bias training has a debatable impact on preventing and/or removing negative outcomes. See also our definition of <i>bias</i> .
Under-represented group	A person or group of people who are insufficiently or inadequately represented (holding a smaller percentage within a significant subgroup than the subset holds in the general population).
Workplace Inclusion	An atmosphere where all employees belong, contribute, and can thrive. Requires deliberate and intentional action.
Woke	The earliest usages of <i>woke</i> date back to the early 20th century and the idea of Black people "keeping their eyes open" to the realities of white supremacist violence. While the term <i>woke</i> initially pertained to issues of racial prejudice and discrimination impacting African Americans, the 21 st century as seen it appropriated by other activist groups with different causes; the Oxford English Dictionary defines the term as a person being "alert to injustice in society, especially racism" ^[12] .

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