# DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION POLICY: GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

## INTRODUCTION

This document is intended as a helpful illustration of how the policy document can be used to guide behaviour. It gives examples and tips on how to bring "best practice" on DEI to life in your everyday interactions with colleagues.

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# EXAMPLES: OUR RESPONSIBILITIES IN ACTION

Below are some examples of how we can each live our responsibilities, as outlined in the policy document. These are situational and person-dependent, but can be used as illustrations to guide behaviour.

**The Leadership Team should:**

- Actively strive to seek perspectives from employees at all levels, and be open to challenge;
- Hold directors and line managers to account for upholding the DEI policy, for example in ensuring correct procedures are followed in employment practices such as recruitment;
- Commit to sourcing a diverse pool of talent for roles and challenging themselves and each other around potential biases during shortlisting;
- Address any reported issues regarding external stakeholder behaviour. For example, if a signatory or supplier were to use inappropriate language in an interaction with an employee, we would have a conversation with that person to discuss the impact and, if appropriate, we may consider ending our relationship with them;
- Prioritise DEI as a core part of the PRI's strategy and values; and
- Personally support and sponsor initiatives related to DEI such as LGBTQ+ Pride.

**Directors and Line Managers should:**

- Consider equity in allocation of work and development opportunities;
- Avoid making assumptions, for example assuming a colleague is in a heterosexual relationship (i.e. "Does your partner work in the City?" rather than "Does your boyfriend work in the City?");
- Be mindful of how natural affinities with team members (such as having a similar educational background) can influence decision-making if not kept in check;
- Prioritise sourcing a diverse candidate pool by advertising a role to underrepresented communities over speed of hiring, e.g. posting on LinkedIn that you are open to candidates from a range of backgrounds, or using diversity-focused jobs boards;
- Ensure administrative work is not consistently allocated to female team members; and
- Ensure that if an individual contravened this policy and a grievance was raised, it would negatively impact their pay and promotion opportunities.

**All employees should:**

- Practice everyday inclusion in common interactions with colleagues, such as including every team member in social activities and varying the time of day for social events;
- Avoid stereotypes, such as "All people from X country are XXX";
- Commit to learning more about a DEI topic through wider reading and attending training;
- Engage with and contribute to celebrating key dates such as International Women's Day and Black History Month; and
- Report any inappropriate behaviour via the correct channels as outlined in the policy.

# EXAMPLES: DISCRIMINATION, BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

See below some examples of the type of behaviour that we do not tolerate as per the policy.

- Age: assuming an older colleague will not be proficient with modern technology, or assuming a person who appears young is more junior than they are.
- Disability (including physical and mental disabilities): refusing to uphold adjustments that have been agreed for a person, e.g. a change to their working hours, and telling colleagues that the person is "constantly late" or "clocking off early".
- Family and other caring responsibilities: assuming a person with caring responsibilities will not want to be considered for a promotion because they already have "too much on".
- Gender identity, expression and reassignment: refusing to use a person's preferred pronouns or persistently using a person's "deadname".
- Languages: mocking a person's accent when speaking their non-native language.
- Pregnancy and maternity: asking a person who is pregnant if they plan to come back to work after maternity leave.
- Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin): asking a person where they are "really" from, based on their skin colour.
- Religion or belief: telling a person they cannot take time to pray during work hours or making jokes about a person's religious symbols or practices.
- Sexual orientation: making jokes about a bi person being "unable to decide", or "outing" a person without their permission (i.e. sharing their sexual orientation with others).
- Socio-economic background: telling a person their accent is "unprofessional" or assuming someone who went to a certain educational institution is more able than others who did not.

# TOP TIPS ON EVERYDAY INCLUSION

For more detailed guidance on how to behave inclusively in everyday situations.

**Mindful communication: listen more, talk carefully**

Communication is the first aspect we can adjust for greater inclusion. If used inappropriately, our words can express wrong intentions or create misunderstandings. When addressing a group, avoid using gender-specific words such as "ladies", "dudes", "men", "guys". Alternatively you can address a group as "folks", "team", "everyone" etc.

Listening is important. Do not interrupt. Don't overtalk. Respect the time of the person in front of you, be attentive and sensitive to what interruption, over-talking and over-explaining may involve. Leave space for questions and replies, make sure you do not lecture when you get involved in a conversation.

Try to avoid assertive language and words: try to introduce your contribution with "According to my experience" or "Based on what I've read and learned".

**Don't avoid the difficult conversations**

Conflict and disagreements are natural part of life, especially on topics which are very personal to us as individuals. We encourage the promotion of dialogue and conversation on all topics no matter how challenging. However, we recognise that these are sometimes difficult conversations to have. Some tips on how to address a conflict or disagreement with a colleague:

- Be prepared with your own perspective (using "I" statements to avoid sounding accusatory) but also be open minded to hearing views that are different to your own. You don't need to challenge or pass comment on these – it's fine to agree to disagree.
- Consider when/where you have the conversation – give yourself enough time and try to do this in person because plenty of our communication is non-verbal.
- It is important that everyone feels able to say what they really think. When other people's views are articulated bluntly or clumsily, try to suspend instant judgment. Be candid, but feedback should be non-judgemental. Commit to listening to any feedback as to why your own ideas or language might cause offence.

**Challenge your own stereotypes and assumptions**

Unconscious biases, prejudices, lack of information, influence of the media, and teachings coming from our cultural and social beliefs may all impact the way that we interact with others. We are often very unaware of these biases because they are so embedded into our own experiences and upbringing, but they can strongly influence our behaviour and decision-making.

Try to recognise when you are likely to have very different experiences from a person and pause to ask yourself if your assumptions about them might be influencing how you think, feel and act around them. For example, am I assuming this person has a certain socio-economic background and level of education because of their accent? Is this influencing my view on their capability, and therefore the  level of work that they should be given?

**Be aware of your privileges**

Talking about privileges can be difficult and often very uncomfortable. However, being aware of our own privileges is a crucial first step to adapting a more inclusive attitude.

Privileges are social, political, and cultural constructions. Part of a broader system, privileges generally are not created at a personal level. Rather they are the products of the artificial divisions that are perpetuated by the structures, systems, and institutions that exist in our world. For example, having had the family finances to be able to go to university without having to support yourself with a part-time job is a privilege, as it enables you to focus on your studies and extra-curricular activity such as sports and societies.

It's important to acknowledge how this system of privileges works and where we position ourselves within it. In the workplace, you might do this by recognising where you may feel more confident than others (for example, in a meeting where you are part of the majority), and using your own confidence to invite someone else to speak up. You may also recognise your privilege in terms of considering the advantages your social connections may have given you: do you have a lot in common with your boss, which strengthened your relationship, which turned into an informal mentoring partnership? Did this contribute positively to your career development, which helped you to have the confidence to put yourself forward for your promotion?

It's also important to note that just because you experience one type of privilege does not mean you are privileged in all aspects. For example, you might feel more confident at a networking event with people from the same university as you, but you also might feel less privileged because you are from a different racial/ethnic group to the majority.

Simply recognising these situations will help you to consider how others will have been situated in less privileged positions, according to the same system. Do you tend to mentor, or even just give advice to, people who are similar to you? Who else in your team could you help to develop?

**Be proactive in educating yourself on topics**

By doing simple research online, you can find many essays, articles, reports, academic and non-academic resources on DEI topics (for example, Stonewall's Glossary and Terms). You can also attend events and discussion forums hosted by the PRI on key dates such as Black History Month to learn more.

Don't wait for the people affected by the problem to show you how to be better. Everyone is responsible for improving their own reality, everyone has the power to change things and learn how to make the world more liveable and sustainable for everyone. Doing your part by educating yourself proactively is a fundamental step to becoming a supportive ally.

You can access free webinars online, such as this session on Combating Bias or Equality and Diversity Training on MyGo1.

You can also complete the Harvard Implicit Assocation test if you want to understand some of your own biases.

**Do not fear mistakes**

Becoming and remaining inclusive is a process, not an objective to be achieved. As in all processes, it is important to remain open and curious, to continue looking for opportunities to learn about various topics.

However, it is important to remember that, as with every process, not everything comes immediately. Taking the risk of becoming better for others means not being afraid to make mistakes and not being afraid of feedback. Instead, feedback — both from our own reflections and from those around us — is a vital tool in teaching us how to become more inclusive both in the present moment and in the future.

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For example, if you make a mistake by using the wrong pronouns for a person and they correct you, simply apologise and move on by learning from the experience.

# DEFINITIONS

To clarify certain terms used in the policy document.

- **Bullying**: a persistent pattern of mistreatment from others in the workplace that causes either physical or emotional harm. For example, consistent criticism and dismissiveness of ideas.
- **Direct discrimination:** Direct discrimination is when someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic, such as gender or race. For example, someone is not given a promotion because they're a working mother and the assumption is that they will not be able to handle the additional workload.
- **Disability:** a physical or mental condition that has a substantial and long-term effect on everyday activities. For example, feelings of low mood or nervousness due to a particular circumstance would generally not be considered a disability, but a longer-term feeling of low mood or anxiousness which impacts day-to-day working productivity would be considered a disability. Long term health conditions such as cancer can also be considered a disability. The vast majority of disabilities are acquired during a person's lifetime, rather than being something they are born with.
- **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:** Diversity is the presence of difference that enriches our team and working environment, including personal characteristics such as race/ethnicity and gender identity. Equity is ensuring that access and resources are provided for all to succeed and develop their careers, especially those with different needs who may have historically been disadvantaged. Inclusion is a workplace culture that is welcoming to all people from different backgrounds and values individuals for their different perspectives.
- **Ethnicity/race.** Ethnicity refers to the group of people you identify with according to common racial, national, tribal, religious, linguistic, or cultural origin or background. Race is based on geographical and/or physical common traits.
- **Gender identity, expression and reassignment**: Gender identity is the gender with which a person most closely represents their personal sense of self and can range outside of the male/female binary. Gender dysphoria is a condition where a person experiences distress because there's a mismatch between their biological sex (usually assigned at birth by a doctor) and gender identity. Gender reassignment (more commonly known as "transition") is the process whereby a person's physical attributes are brought closer into alignment with the gender with which they identify (their acquired gender). This can involve medical intervention such as hormones or surgery. Gender expression is how a person displays their gender to the outside world, typically through appearance, dress, and behaviour.
- **Harassment:** any behaviour that makes you feel uncomfortable or unsafe in your work environment based on a personal characteristic you have or a person thinks you may have or you are connected to someone holding such characteristic. For example, spreading rumours about a person having mental health problems or refusing to work with someone who has a certain sexual orientation.
- **Indirect discrimination:** Indirect discrimination is when there's a practice, policy or rule which applies to everyone in the same way, but it has a negative effect on some. For example, an expectation that all new joiners will organise work drinks on a Friday, regardless of whether their religion or any health condition would preclude them from drinking alcohol themselves.
- **Sexual orientation:** an enduring pattern of romantic or sexual attraction to persons of a different sex or gender to you, the same sex or gender, or to both sexes or more than one gender. For example, identifying as a homosexual man generally means you are attracted to other people who identify as male. For more detail, see our LGBTQ+ Network Primer.

- **Socio-economic background:** is an economic and social combined total measure of a person's position in relation to others, based on income, education, and occupation. For example, someone whose parents both attended university would generally be considered to have higher socio-economic status than a person whose parents did not.
- **Multiple identities/intersectionality:** we all have multiple elements to our identity, for example our race/ethnicity and our gender identity. The concept of multiple identities encourages us to look at ourselves and others as a composite of all of those elements and how it shaped our experiences. Intersectionality takes into account the way in which our multiple identities intersect to provide us with certain advantages/disadvantages. For example there is research that suggests Black women are generally paid significantly less than White women, so a gender equality programme must also look at race/ethnicity if it is to truly tackle the problem.

# FAQS

- **What do I do if I think there has been a breach of the DEI policy?**

You can speak to the DEI Lead or Chief People Officer if you are unsure, or report the instance through the formal channels as set out in the [Grievance Policy](#). Conversations will be kept confidential, and your anonymity will be protected, as long as in doing so this doesn't endanger you or any other individual.

- **Where can I find the PRI's DEI strategy?**

You can find details of our [DEI strategy here on Pulse.](#) You can also find out more about our [employee-led DEI Working Group here.](#)

- **Who can I provide feedback to on this policy?**

You can speak to the DEI Lead ([Lucy Hutchinson](#)) in the first instance – your feedback and suggestions are very welcome! This is a live document which we will review and adapt as needed over time.

- **How can I get involved in DEI work and help to build an inclusive culture?**

This area is something we are all responsible for, as outlined in the Roles and Responsibilities section in the Policy. You can begin by role modelling inclusive behaviours in your everyday interactions with your colleagues, such as the examples provided above.