

Handout - Identifying inequality

When teaching, you will want to be fair to everyone, and treat all your learners equally. However, you might be concerned that you, or another learner, will say or do something that will offend or upset someone. You will need to identify forms of inequality in your teaching and in your organisation to alleviate any negative impact this might have. Forms of inequality can be divided into two dimensions:

Primary: Characteristics which are inherent or quite noticeable	Secondary: Characteristics which are less obvious or less noticeable
Age Attitude Colour Culture Disability - physical Dress Ethnicity Gender Language, accent, dialect Physical appearance Sexuality	Ability and intelligence/skills Criminal record Disability - mental Education Employment status Family background and status Financial status Gender identity Gender reassignment Health (permanent or temporary) Home environment Marriage and civil partnership Maternity and pregnancy (early stages) Nationality Political conviction Race Religion or belief Sexual orientation

The table above lists characteristics against which many people show prejudice, and therefore might be the target for discriminatory practices. There are far more secondary than primary characteristics, therefore it is important never to assume anything, but to base the characteristics on fact. If you can identify any characteristics which might lead to inequality, you can be proactive in preventing situations occurring, rather than being reactive after they have occurred.