

Promoting equality and valuing diversity

This presentation will cover:

- What is equality?
- The Equality Act (2010)
- Protected Characteristics
- Types of discrimination
- What is diversity?
- Valuing equality and advancing diversity
- Ways to promote equality and value diversity
- Summary quiz
- Reading list
- Website list

What is equality?

What does equality mean to you?

What is equality?

- Equality is about the rights of learners to have access to, attend, and participate in their chosen learning experience
- This should be regardless of their circumstances
- Inequality and discrimination should be tackled to ensure fairness, decency and respect amongst all learners

- In the past, equality has often been described as *everyone being the same or having the same opportunities*
- Nowadays, it can be described as *everyone being different, but having equal rights*
- Equality of opportunity is a concept underpinned by legislation

Equality Act (2010)

- The Equality Act (2010) replaced all previous anti-discrimination legislation and consolidated it into one act for England, Scotland and Wales
- There are separate requirements in Northern Ireland

- The Act provides rights for people not to be directly discriminated against or harassed because they have an *association* with a disabled person, nor must people be directly discriminated against or harassed because they are *wrongly perceived* as disabled
- Reasonable adjustments must take place during teaching and learning activities to lessen or remove the effects of a disadvantage to a learner with a disability

Protected Characteristics

- The Act identified nine *protected characteristics*
- A *protected characteristic* refers to aspects of a person's identity which are explicitly protected from discrimination

The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Types of discrimination

Under the Equality Act (2010), there are seven different *types of discrimination*:

- Associative
- Direct
- Indirect
- By perception
- Harassment: behaviour
- Harassment: by a third party
- Victimisation

What is diversity?

What does diversity mean to you?

What is diversity?

- Diversity is about valuing and respecting the differences in people, regardless of ability and/or circumstances, or any other individual characteristics they may have
- If you have two or more learners, you will experience diversity
- Learners are entitled to be treated with respect, with their differences acknowledged and taken into consideration

Valuing equality and advancing diversity

- You should be positive and pro-active where equality and diversity are concerned
- You may have to challenge your own attitudes, values and beliefs
- As a professional, you are first and foremost a teacher, and your personal opinions must not interfere with the teaching and learning process

Ways to promote equality and value diversity

- Have a positive attitude and the ability to be proactive rather than reactive to situations
- Deal with any issues of harassment, discrimination, stereotyping or bullying which might occur within your sessions, as soon as possible
- Remind learners that their point of view is not necessarily the same as others

Ways to promote equality and value diversity

What are some other ways in which can you promote equality and value diversity with your learners?

- Ensure that all your learners' experiences are acknowledged, included and valued
- Hold theme weeks based on different cultures, religions, disabilities etc
- Plan your scheme of work to include aspects such as special dates/religious holidays and plan activities around them eg Chinese New Year
- Plan your sessions to use differentiated activities and resources
- Be consistent and fair with all assessment decisions

- Create resources in accessible fonts (most could be available in electronic format for easy access and adaptation)
- If printing handouts, use pastel coloured paper for everyone - this helps a learner with dyslexia and includes them the same as part of the rest of the group.
- If using pictures, ensure they represent all aspects of society
- Use a range of teaching styles to reach all learning styles
- Face your learners when speaking to them

- Use group tutorials as a forum for activities and discussions
- Create an environment free of prejudice, discrimination and harassment, where learners can contribute fully and freely, and feel valued
- Agree ground rules and establish acceptable behaviour
- Use icebreakers to help learners get to know each other
- Share your resources and collaborate with others to create new ones eg quizzes

- Know about your organisation's policies and procedures for dealing with your learners' complaints. This should have been shared with learners during induction
- The policy should explain:
 - a definition of unacceptable behaviour
 - how learners can report bullying, harassment or any other forms of unacceptable behaviour
 - how you and the organisation will deal with unacceptable behaviour

- Treat any complaints seriously, regardless of who brings them and investigate the complaint thoroughly
- Deal quickly and firmly with anyone who acts inappropriately
- Deal with matters informally and internally if possible. The solution may be as simple as pointing out to a learner the effect that their behaviour has on others and asking them to stop
- Mix learners during group activities so that everyone has the opportunity to work with others

Summary quiz

1. Give a definition of equality.
2. When was the Equality Act passed?
3. How many protected characteristics are in the Equality Act?
4. Give a definition of diversity.
5. Under the Equality Act (2010) learners can claim something is offensive even when it is not directed at them. True or False?

Reading list

- Gravells A & Simpson S (2012) *Equality and Diversity in the Lifelong Learning Sector* London Learning Matters SAGE
- Gravells A (2017) *Principles and Practices of Teaching and Training* London Learning Matters SAGE
- Ioda (2010) *Diversity Fairness and Equality Information Booklet* Ioda Limited
- Patel J & Yafai G (2016) *Demystifying Diversity: A Handbook to Navigate Equality, Diversity and Inclusion* London Gilgamesh
- Spencerley L (2014) *Inclusion in Further Education* Northwich Critical Publications Ltd
- Thompson N (2011) *Promoting Equality: Working with Diversity and Difference* Basingstoke Palgrave Macmillan

Website list

- Differentiated teaching and learning activities - www.tes.com/teaching-resource/challenge-toolkit-6063318
- Disability Equality in Education – www.worldofinclusion.com/inclusion_education.htm
- Disability Now - <https://disabilitynow.org.uk>
- Disability Rights UK - www.disabilityrightsuk.org
- Equality and Diversity Forum – www.edf.org.uk
- Equality Act (2010) - <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
- Equality Commission for Northern Ireland - <http://www.equalityni.org/site/default.asp?secid=home>
- Equality and Human Rights Commission – www.equalityhumanrights.com/en

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