



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - Glossary of Terms Updated 2026

FACT believes that the language we use is essential in helping to create a safe and inclusive environment where everyone feels welcome and included. We will agree on, and regularly review, a shared language that is inclusive, reduces bias, recognises barriers and demonstrates an understanding of how different lived experiences lead to different ways of experiencing the world.

This shared language will be the basis of our internal and external communications, including in style guides, induction packs for new staff and marketing materials. The development and revisions to this shared language will form a key part of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy and glossary of terms.

Glossary

Ableism: The discrimination of and social prejudice against people with disabilities based on the belief that typical abilities are superior

Ageism: A system of beliefs, attitudes, and actions that stereotype and discriminate against individuals or groups on the basis of their age

Agender: Individuals who identify as not having a specific gender, or any gender at all. This may include individuals who identify as having a gender but do not feel it can be defined in terms of a male/female spectrum, or at all

Ally: Someone who supports a group of people who do not share the same characteristics as their own. Allies acknowledge the disadvantage and oppression of other groups; take action on the behalf of others, and invest in strengthening their own knowledge and awareness of oppression

Bigender: Individuals who identify as bigender experience exactly two distinct genders, either simultaneously or varying between the two. These two could be male and female but could also include any non-binary gender identity as well



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Bullying: Bullying is repeated behaviour intended to harm, intimidate, humiliate or coerce a person or persons perceived to have less social or physical power. It may be inflicted in many forms such as physically, emotionally, psychologically or even indirectly.

Cisgender: Individuals whose gender identity and expression line up with their birth-assigned sex

Code of Conduct: A set of rules issued by an organization outlining the acceptable and unacceptable behaviour of staff members

Discrimination: The practice of treating individuals differently based on prejudices about perceived characteristics (e.g. age, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic class)

Diversity: The practice of including individuals from a wide variety of different backgrounds and identities, such as gender, ethnicity, age, religious beliefs, nationality etc

Dominant culture: The cultural beliefs, values, and traditions that are centred and dominant in society's structures and practices. Dominant cultural practices are thought of as "normal" and, therefore, preferred and right. As a result, diverse ways of life are often devalued, marginalised, and associated with low cultural capital

Equity: acknowledges that people have different circumstances and provides the specific resources needed to reach an equal outcome

Equality: The principle of ensuring every individual has equal opportunities and rights, free from discrimination based on protected characteristics

Gender identity: A person's sense of what their own gender is, which may or may not correspond with their birth sex

Genderqueer: A general term, similar to non-binary, for people who experience a gender identity or expression other than the conventional male and female binary

Grievance: A formal complaint raised by an employee with their employer about their work, the workplace or colleagues

Harassment: Humiliating, offensive, or threatening behaviour directed at an individual or group. Can include, but is not limited to, discriminatory behaviour covered by law

Homogenising: The opposite of diversity, this term refers to when something is all the same. An example in the workplace would be if all members of staff were of a single religion or ethnic group with no diversity present

Inclusion: A dynamic state of operating in which diversity is leveraged to create a fair, healthy, and high-performing organisation or community. An inclusive environment ensures equitable access to resources and opportunities for all. It also enables individuals and groups to feel safe, respected, engaged, motivated, and valued, for who they are and for their contributions toward organisational and societal goals

Inclusivity: The practice of providing equal access to resources or opportunities to people who might otherwise be excluded, disadvantaged or marginalised from a group

Intersectionality: The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender that can create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage

LGBTQIA+: Acronym encompassing the diverse groups of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer, intersex and asexual populations and allies/alliances/associations

Misconduct: Inappropriate behaviour that breaks the law or workplace rules

Neurodiversity: The overarching, biological fact that all human brains are unique and diverse. It is the concept, not a trait of a person or group

Neurodivergent (individual): A person whose neurological development and cognitive functioning, learning and social behaviours differ from neurotypical brains



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Nonbinary: Any gender identity that does not conform with the male and female binary

Privilege: A right or advantage that only some people have access or availability to because of their social group membership

Pronouns: A preferred gender pronoun is a consciously chosen set of pronouns that allow a person to accurately represent their gender identity. A trans person may begin using a gender-neutral pronoun prior to transitioning, or a non-binary person may choose to use a neutral pronoun

Race: Race is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. Within the Act, race means colour, nationality, citizenship, ethnic origin and national origin

Social economic background: Refers to an individual's upbringing, shaped by parental occupation, education, and household income

Unconscious bias: The attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases are activated involuntarily and without an individual's awareness or intentional control

Victimisation: Focusing unjust or cruel treatment onto an individual or particular group