



**Scottish
Ambulance
Service**

Working in Partnership with Universities

**Organisational
Development**



Inclusion Starts with I Time to Learn

Elevate Your Learning

Organisational Development & Wellbeing Team

Aim This session is designed to increase awareness of how individual identities and experiences shape inclusion within the organisation, providing participants with the tools and understanding needed to actively create a more inclusive environment through self-reflection, intentional language, and role modelling.

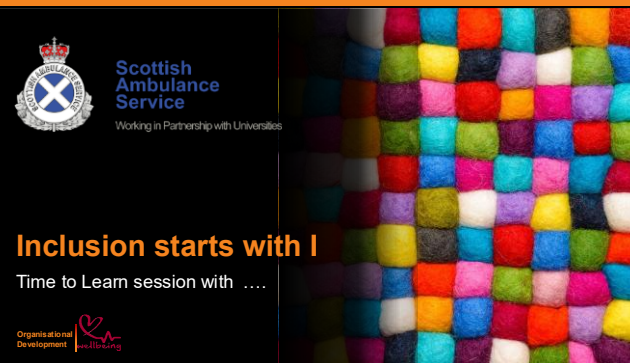
Objectives

- Define what Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) means and explore its practical importance in creating an inclusive organisational culture.
- Examine the influence of dominant identities and reflect on how visible and invisible advantages shape experiences within SAS and wider society, utilising the wheel of privilege.
- Discuss the role of language in fostering inclusion, focusing on the principles of intention vs impact in communication and how they can shape interactions.
- Explore the boundaries of banter, distinguishing between playful and harmful exchanges, and the importance of establishing mutual respect within teams.

Session time 2.5 hrs

Session Context

This session aims to challenge participants to reflect on how dominant identities, language, and unconscious biases shape their interactions and the inclusivity of the organisation. Through self-reflection and practical discussion, the session will equip participants with a deeper understanding of how they can actively contribute to a more inclusive culture, moving beyond awareness to everyday action. The goal is to foster a workplace where all colleagues feel valued and empowered to bring their whole selves to work.

Inclusion Starts with I	
Session – Objectives Resources - Timings	
Session Welcome & intro to session objectives. 2.5 hours Objectives • Provide colleagues with a warm welcome. • Set expectations for session. Timings 0 hours 15 minutes Running total 0 hours 15 minutes	 Inclusion starts with I Time to Learn session with • Welcome everyone to the Inclusion Starts with I, Time to learn session. Thank you so much for attending. • I look forward to providing you with an interactive session and one that leaves a lasting and positive impression and that will hopefully impact your approaches going forwards both professionally and personally. Slide  Getting the most from the session

To get the most from the sessions can you.

- Get involved use the chat box to share your thoughts and ideas.
- Participate in the group discussions.
- Have some paper at the ready for activities and to capture your own notes.
- Finally, lets dispel the training myth, attending the training sessions will provide knowledge, but this knowledge does not make you an 'expert', what then is required is to put that knowledge into practice.

Slide**Objectives**

- Define what Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) means and why it is important for our organisation to be truly inclusive
- Explore the impact of dominant identities & your visible/invisible advantages
- Discuss your intention vs your impact during interactions
- Explore how you can be a role model for inclusion, moving from bystander to ally



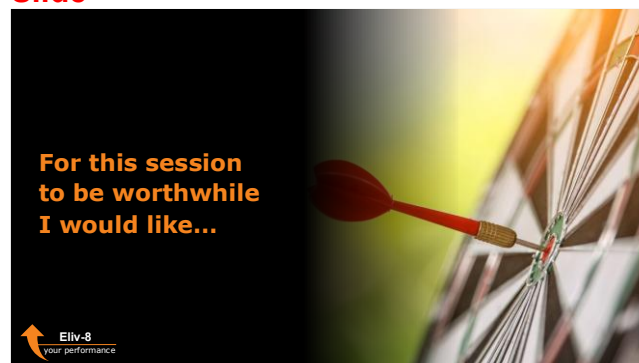
Organisational
Development | Wellbeing

Explain: Session objectives

- Define what Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) means and explore its practical importance in creating an inclusive organisational culture.
- Examine the influence of dominant identities and reflect on how visible and invisible advantages shape experiences within SAS and wider society, utilising the wheel of privilege.
- Discuss the role of language in fostering inclusion, focusing on the principles of intention vs impact in communication and how they can shape interactions.
- Explore the boundaries of banter, distinguishing between playful and harmful exchanges, and the importance of establishing mutual respect within teams.

State

Now that you know the objectives of the session, I'd love to know what will make this session worthwhile for you, pop your thoughts in the chat box.

Slide**Chat Box Action**

- Read out some statements from the chat box
- Pick up on any trends, where necessary, pick out 1 or 2 standout statements – ask for more information.

Explain

Throughout today's session, we are going to explore lots of different ideas and strategies. We can all role model these as we work towards the goal of being part of an organisation which is diverse and values the differences, we can all bring.

This session may challenge some of your existing beliefs and may make you feel uncomfortable at times. That's okay. Discomfort is part of learning. I encourage you to lean into it, reflect on what it means, and share your thoughts respectfully.

Slide (animated)

Who has heard this saying before?

- What does this saying imply about how we approach understanding or believing things?
- What are the potential risks or limitations of this mindset, especially in the context of recognising discrimination or bias?

**Ask**

Who has heard this saying before ‘I’ll believe it when I see it’

- What does this saying imply about how we approach understanding or believing things?
- What are the potential risks or limitations of this mindset, especially in the context of recognising discrimination or bias?

Slide

Some things
need to be
believed
to be seen



Source: CNN Heores

Explain

We often hear, 'I'll believe it when I see it,' but when it comes to discrimination and inequality, the reverse is often true. 'Some things need to be believed to be seen' reminds us to trust people's experiences, even when we can't witness them ourselves.

For marginalised groups, challenges like bias and discrimination are often dismissed with comments like, 'I haven't seen that,' or 'You're playing the race card,' which invalidates their experiences. By believing their stories, we can begin to uncover hidden biases and build a more inclusive culture, even when these issues aren't always visible. – **Let's keep this in mind throughout this session**

****Context for this picture:** Patrick Hutchinson attended a Black Lives Matter march on **June 13, 2020** in London, where he was photographed carrying a counter-protester to safety. The image of this act of compassion went viral, symbolizing unity and humanity amidst the tensions during the protests.

This picture was widely shared on Twitter (X) and lots of people refuted the picture as a fake, did not believe that this action could have taken place.

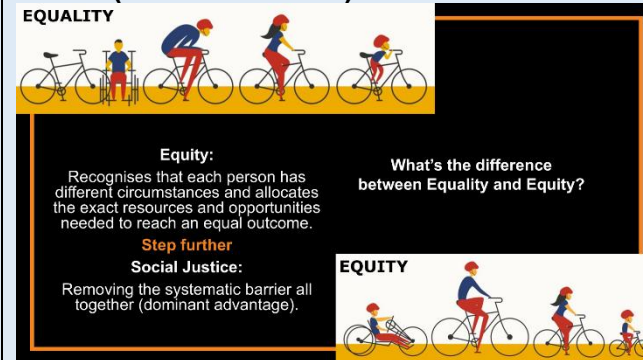
Ask the group if they have any additional questions deal with then move on.

Session Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion - why bother? Objective Define what Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) means and why it is important. Session timings 0 hours 30 minutes Running total 0 hours 45 minutes	Session Positioning This session has been designed to discuss the importance of EDI and explore why it's important to take action to ensure SAS is an inclusive, diverse organisation. Explain Now that we've set the stage, let's dive into what Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) means, and explore why these concepts are critical to creating an equitable and inclusive workplace. Slide (animated slide) Diversity, Inclusion, Equality Diversity: is the range of human differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes, religious or ethical values system, national origin, and political beliefs. Inclusion: is ensuring that people feel a sense of belonging. This means that every person feels comfortable and supported when it comes to being their authentic selves. Equality: essentially means providing everyone with the same number of resources regardless of whether everyone needs them. In other words, each person receives an equal share of resources despite what they already have, or don't have. ELEVATE your learning Ask How would you define Diversity – Inclusion – Equality? Slide notes Equality – Ensuring that everyone has the same opportunities and receives the same treatment, regardless of their differences, so that they can achieve their full potential. Diversity - The recognition and celebration of the wide range of human differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability, religious or ethical values system, political beliefs and other attributes.
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[\(1591\) Equality
Diversity & Inclusion
in 2021 - WHAT'S IT
ALL ABOUT? -
YouTube](#)

Inclusion - Is ensuring that people feel a sense of belonging. This means that every person feels comfortable and supported when it comes to being their authentic selves.

Slide (animated slide)



Ask

What's the difference between equality and equity?

Equality vs Equity

While the terms equity and equality may sound similar, the implementation of one versus the other can lead to dramatically different outcomes for marginalised people.

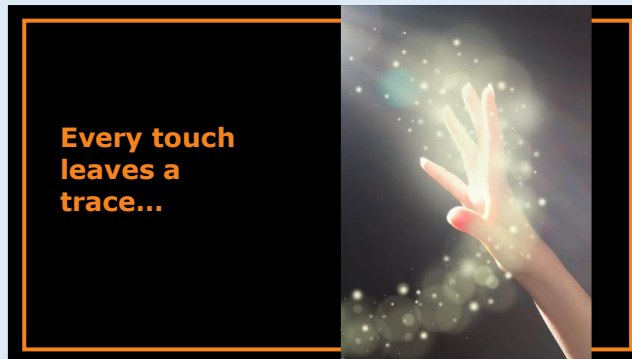
- **Equality** means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities.
- **Equity** recognises that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.
- **Social Justice:** removing the systematic barrier all together (dominant advantage).

Slide**Ask**

If we have the equality act, why do we need to do more?

Explain

Legislation on its own does not bring about change. How we think, feel, and behave towards each other does. It is everyone's responsibility to deliver the changes that will make the world a more inclusive place for everyone. This aligns to our values of Care and compassion, Equality, Dignity, and Respect and Openness, Honest and Responsibility.

Slide

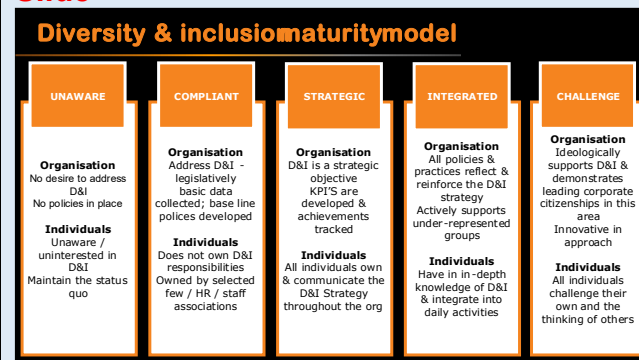
Explain

Every touch leaves a trace, we need to acknowledge that everyone can influence change. This impact can take many forms, and while not all change may be recognised on a larger scale, it's often the small actions that create a ripple effect within our own circles—among colleagues, friends, and communities.

Research shows that climates of inclusion improve engagement and performance, with 70% of the feeling of inclusion based on what leaders say and do. The experience of inclusion matters most in creating meaningful change.”

Source - Bourke, J. & Titus, A. (2020). *The Key to Inclusive Leadership*. Harvard Business Review article
<https://hbr.org/2020/03/the-key-to-inclusive-leadership>

Reflective question: Can we ever truly be an Inclusive ambulance service to the public if we are not a truly inclusive organisation for our staff?

Slide**Ask**

Who's heard of the diversity and inclusion maturity model?

Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Maturity Model is a framework that helps organisations assess their current state of diversity and inclusion efforts and provides a roadmap for progress. The model typically outlines different stages of maturity, each describing how well an organisation is integrating D&I principles into its culture, practices, and policies.

Source: Tapia, A. & Kienast, D. (2020). *The Korn Ferry Diversity and Inclusion Maturity Model 2.0*. Korn Ferry.

<https://www.globewomen.org/globaldiversity/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Korn-Ferry-Diversity-and-Inclusion-Maturity-Model-2020-Andres-Tapia.pdf>

Maturity Matrix notes

- **Unaware or Passive:** Organisations in this stage have minimal awareness of D&I issues. There are no formal policies or practices in place, and D&I is not a priority. Individuals may be unaware of or uninterested in D&I efforts.
- **Compliant:** At this stage, organisations comply with legal or regulatory requirements related to diversity but take no further proactive action. D&I may be seen as an HR responsibility rather than a shared organisational goal. Diversity may be represented in numbers, but inclusion is still lacking.
- **Strategic:** D&I becomes a strategic priority, with organisations establishing clear goals, metrics, and accountability measures. There is a growing recognition that D&I enhances performance and innovation, and efforts are embedded into the organisation's objectives. Leaders take a more active role in promoting inclusion.
- **Integrated:** D&I is fully integrated into all aspects of the organisation. Policies, systems, and practices reflect a commitment to diversity and inclusion. Employees at all levels take ownership of D&I efforts, and the organisational culture supports the ongoing development of inclusive behaviours.
- **Innovative or Leading:** Organisations in this stage not only embrace D&I internally but also advocate for it externally. They are seen as role models in their industry for driving cultural change and innovation through D&I efforts. They continuously refine their approach to remain at the forefront of inclusive practices.

Slide Activity: SAS Diversity & Inclusion Maturity Model (8 minutes group – 7 minutes debrief)**Breakout: Diversity & Inclusion Maturity**

- Where do you feel SAS currently stands on the Diversity and Inclusion Maturity Matrix?
- What are we doing well?
- Where could we improve?
- How can we move forward?



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your learning

Action

Split into smaller groups, appoint 1 person to feedback group thoughts

Consider:

- Where do you feel SAS currently stands on the Diversity and Inclusion Maturity Matrix?
- What are we doing well?
- Where could we improve?
- How can we move forward?

Once the 8 minutes are up close the breakout groups and give each group a quick 60 seconds to debrief the main point of their conversations.

**** No slide unshare screen for discussion**

Section Summary

Thanks, everyone, for your reflections. What the Diversity & Inclusion Maturity Model helps us do is step back and honestly assess where we are—both as an organisation and as individuals.

	It shows us that true inclusion doesn't stop at legal compliance or having the right policies—it grows as we take ownership, embed inclusive behaviours into daily work, and challenge ourselves and each other to think differently. The goal isn't just to move up the model—it's to become more intentional, more aware, and more accountable at every stage. That's how we create real, lasting change. Let's now turn our attention to identity—because understanding how identity shows up, especially dominant identity, is essential to understanding who gets seen, heard, and supported in the workplace.
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Session Society is made through the eyes of the majority Learning objective • Discuss the benefits of being part of the dominant identity Session timings 0 hours 40 minutes Running total 1 hours 25 minutes	Session Positioning This session has been designed to explore how society is constructed through the eyes of the majority. What this means in real terms and the impact this has on whether society is fair and equal for all. Slide  Ask Who has heard of the concept 'The dominant identity shapes the world'? • What does this mean to you? • Who or what are the dominant identities in the UK? • What is the impact of these dominant identities on our society and workplace? Explain The concept that the dominant identity shapes the world is widely recognised in sociological and cultural discussions. It refers to how the identities and perspectives of those who hold the most social, political, and economic power tend to shape societal norms, values, institutions, and systems. These dominant identities often dictate what is considered "normal" or "universal," influencing laws, policies, and cultural practices.
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Slide**Dominant identity explained**

Who Holds Dominant Identities? Dominant identities are typically those that have 'advantage' in society.

How the Dominant Identity Shapes Society: The values, norms, and systems of a society are often aligned with the experiences and perspectives of those holding dominant identities.

Marginalised Groups: Marginalised or underrepresented groups (such as people who come from an ethnically diverse background, LGBT Community, women, or people with disabilities) may feel excluded or forced to adapt to systems that do not reflect their lived experiences or needs.

Challenging the Dominant Identity's Influence: Many inclusion efforts aim to challenge the over-representation of dominant identities and make space for diverse perspectives, thereby creating systems and environments that are more equitable. **This involves recognising how privilege operates and actively seeking to shift the balance of power to create more inclusive spaces.**

Slide notes**Who Holds Dominant Identities?**

- Dominant identities are typically those that are privileged in a society. This might include characteristics like being male, white, heterosexual, able-bodied, and middle-to-upper class, depending on the context. These individuals often have more societal influence and decision-making power.

How the Dominant Identity Shapes Society:

- The values, norms, and systems of a society are often aligned with the experiences and perspectives of those holding dominant identities. For instance, workplace policies, media representations, and institutional structures may unconsciously cater more to the dominant group, leading to systemic advantages.
 - For example, in many Western societies, the workplace is often designed around the needs and experiences of able-bodied, white, male employees, from expectations around work hours to cultural norms and advancement pathways.

The Impact on Marginalised Groups:

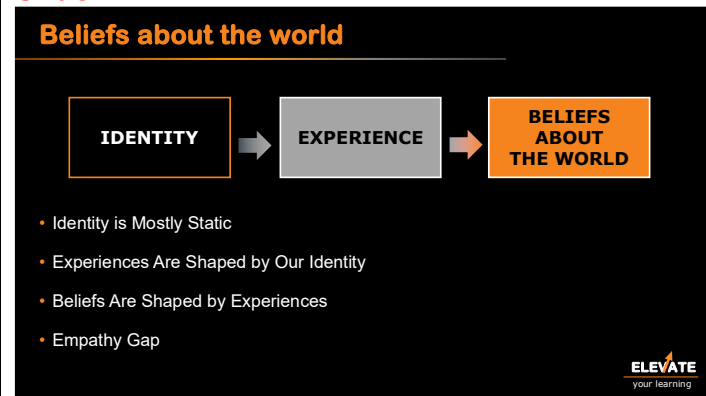
- Marginalised or underrepresented groups (such as women, racial minorities, or people with disabilities) may feel excluded or forced to adapt to systems that do not reflect their lived experiences or needs. This can create disparities in access to opportunities, representation, and inclusion.

Challenging the Dominant Identity's Influence:

- Many inclusion efforts aim to challenge the over-representation of dominant identities and make space for diverse perspectives, thereby creating systems and environments that are more equitable. This involves recognising how privilege operates and actively seeking to shift the balance of power to create more inclusive spaces.

State: This isn't about pointing fingers or blaming any particular group for societal issues. Instead, it's about acknowledging that our society has historically been constructed through the lens of the dominant identity.

While society is evolving and becoming more inclusive, change takes time because many systems and structures have been designed to benefit the majority identity.

Slide

Explain:

Now that we understand dominant identities, let's think about how each of our identities shapes the way we experience and see the world. Whether we hold dominant identities or not, our personal identity frames the experiences we have and our beliefs about the world.

Our outlook on the world is shaped by our experiences, which are, in turn, influenced by our identity. Because our identity is mostly static, this limits the range of experiences we have, which shapes how we see the world.

1. Identity is Mostly Static:

Our identity—whether it's race, gender, or other characteristics—is largely unchanging. For example, I am a white female, and that aspect of my identity will never change. Our identity determines what kinds of experiences we are more likely to have and, in turn, influences our worldview.

2. Experiences Are Shaped by Our Identity:

Because our identity is static, it also limits the experiences we have access to. For example, my experiences as a white woman will always be different from those of someone with a different racial or gender identity. This difference in experiences shapes how we each see and understand the world.

3. Beliefs Are Shaped by Experiences:

As our experiences accumulate, they form the basis for our beliefs about the world. For example, my experiences as a white woman will shape my beliefs about fairness, opportunity, or discrimination—beliefs that may differ from someone with a different identity.

4. Empathy Gap:

No matter how empathetic or well-intentioned I may be, I will never be able to fully walk in the shoes of another person. Our different identities and experiences create what's known as an empathy gap. This means that, although I can try to understand another person's experiences, I will never fully experience the world as they do.

Ask

For their thoughts on the slide, explore, probe and challenge where necessary.

Explain

So, if our identity shapes our worldview and experiences, what happens when we hold dominant identities? - People with dominant identities often experience certain privileges.

Slide (animated)**Explain**

Research suggests that many people feel uncomfortable with the word "privilege" because it implies an unearned advantage, leading to defensiveness. It can feel accusatory, suggesting that the person benefited from something they didn't earn. In contrast, people tend to feel more comfortable with the term "advantage" because it feels less personal and more neutral, making it easier to acknowledge systemic benefits.

Using "advantage" encourages reflection without triggering defensiveness. It allows people to discuss the benefits they receive from their social position without feeling blamed. For example, people are more likely

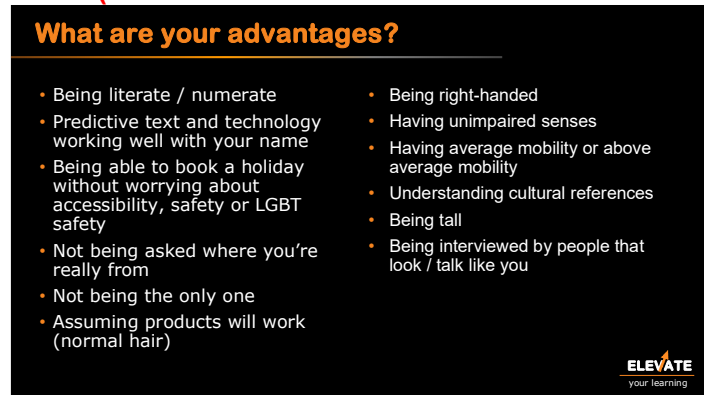
to admit to having "advantages" in areas like education or employment, which are seen as circumstantial rather than morally loaded. ([Inside Higher Ed](#))([Psychology Today](#)).(STANFORD magazine)([Inside Higher Ed](#)).

Slide (2 minutes 24 seconds)



[What is white privilege? - BBC Bitesize](#)

Slide (animated)



	Ask What are some of the advantages you take for granted daily? Suggested responses: <table border="1"> <tr> <td> • Being literate / numerate • Predictive text and technology working well with your name • Being able to book a holiday without worrying about accessibility, safety or LGBT safety • Not being asked where you're really from • Not being the only one • Assuming products will work (normal hair) </td><td> • Being right-handed • Having unimpaired senses • Having average mobility or above average mobility • Understanding cultural references • Being tall • Being interviewed by people that look / talk like you </td></tr> </table> Explain We've looked at some everyday advantages that many of us take for granted, but society is not set up equally for everyone. Dominant identities—those with more power and influence—shape systems in ways that benefit some while disadvantaging others. Whether in education, employment, or access to resources, these advantages create unequal experiences for many. Slide Society is unequal ◦ Poverty affects 53% of Bangladeshi, 48% of Pakistani, and 39% of Black households, compared to 18% of White ◦ Applicants with Black British or African-sounding names had to send 60% more applications to receive a positive response than those with white British names. ◦ 95% of doctors who died from COVID-19 were from Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic backgrounds. ◦ Historically, there were more FTSE 100 CEOs named John or Dave than all female CEOs combined ◦ Applicants with Muslim-sounding names are one-third as likely to be shortlisted ◦ Around 52% of working-age disabled people are employed, compared to over 80% of non-disabled people.	• Being literate / numerate • Predictive text and technology working well with your name • Being able to book a holiday without worrying about accessibility, safety or LGBT safety • Not being asked where you're really from • Not being the only one • Assuming products will work (normal hair)	• Being right-handed • Having unimpaired senses • Having average mobility or above average mobility • Understanding cultural references • Being tall • Being interviewed by people that look / talk like you
• Being literate / numerate • Predictive text and technology working well with your name • Being able to book a holiday without worrying about accessibility, safety or LGBT safety • Not being asked where you're really from • Not being the only one • Assuming products will work (normal hair)	• Being right-handed • Having unimpaired senses • Having average mobility or above average mobility • Understanding cultural references • Being tall • Being interviewed by people that look / talk like you		

Ask

Any standout points on the slide? Has this got you thinking? Here are some more.

Slide 17

Sensor motion dispensers and dark skin: The infrared sensors rely on light reflecting off the skin to activate. Because the developers only used light-skinned test subjects during calibration, the hardware fundamentally misses or errors when reading darker skin tones. It wasn't an intentional exclusion, but a consequence of a non-diverse design team.

Children's books and BME representation: Until 2018, only 1% of children's books had a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) main character, and even in 2018, only 4% of children's books had a BME character. Recent efforts have increased this number, with 24% of books now featuring BME characters ([Popular Science](#))

Skin tone plasters: Historically, "skin-tone" plasters were developed to match lighter skin tones, creating an implicit bias in product design. This reflects a broader issue of assuming lighter skin as the default in many products and services. Recent changes have introduced more inclusive ranges for darker skin tones ([Mozilla Foundation](#)).

	Cleaning products: Toxicological safety limits assume a default male physiology (greater body mass, lower body fat ratios, thicker skin barriers). Regulations heavily ignore the thinness of female skin, lower toxic thresholds, and how endocrine disruptors interact with female hormones. (Nature) Recommended office temperature and metabolic rates: Office temperature standards were developed in the 1960s based on the resting metabolic rate of an average 40-year-old, 154-pound man. A 2015 Dutch study confirmed that women's metabolic rates are significantly lower—up to 35% lower—which makes standard office temperatures too cold for many women, typically around 5°F cooler than optimal for women (livescience.com) Facial recognition and skin colour: Machine learning algorithms learn based on what they are fed. When facial verification databases are 80%+ white, the software struggles with the contours and contrast of Black and Brown faces. For Uber drivers, this technical failure resulted in real-world penalties, wrongful lockouts, and lost income because the software flagged their actual faces as "fraudulent matching errors." Crash test dummies designed around average male: Automotive structural engineering was designed exclusively around the height, weight, and neck muscle strength of the average male physique. Even with the late introduction of female test dummies, they are frequently tested only in the passenger seats, meaning modern vehicle cabins are still structurally safer for male drivers than female drivers during a collision. Transport and accessibility: Public transportation systems are indeed often designed for the majority population, without adequate consideration for individuals with additional needs, such as those with disabilities or mobility issues. This includes a lack of accessible features like elevators, ramps, and appropriately designed seating (Harvard Science in the News). Marriage and equal rights: Marriage rights, especially related to equal treatment under the law, vary widely depending on the country and legal framework. In some countries, significant progress has been
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made toward equality, but social and cultural attitudes often lag behind legal changes, meaning true equality is not always achieved in practice([Popular Science](#)).

Slide



Explain

In essence, the policies and practices in organisations are often designed and influenced by people of the dominant identity, meaning they reflect the needs and experiences of that group, usually without any intention to discriminate. The more someone fits that dominant identity, the more the organisation and its systems will naturally suit them. But this doesn't mean everything is easy for them—it just means the systems are designed with them in mind.

On the other hand, the further someone's identity is from that dominant description, the more they must navigate challenges and push for recognition of their unique circumstances. This can often lead to feeling pressure to conform or hide parts of their identity, which is harmful to both individual well-being and workplace inclusion.

Our identities are not just defined by one characteristic. This is where the concept of **intersectionality** comes in—people carry multiple identities that can overlap, compounding their experiences of privilege or disadvantage. To help us reflect on this, we'll now use the **Wheel of Privilege** to explore where different aspects of our identity intersect and how they shape our experiences.

Slide



Explain

Intersectionality is the concept that individuals do not have just one identity, but rather a combination of identities that overlap, influencing how they experience the world. Coined by scholar **Kimberlé Crenshaw**, intersectionality highlights how different aspects of identity—such as race, gender, class, sexuality, and disability—interact and contribute to unique experiences of privilege or disadvantage.

Without understanding intersectionality, we risk oversimplifying privilege and missing how overlapping identities shape unique life experiences. By exploring both concepts together, we gain a deeper, more nuanced understanding of social inequality and the complexities of privilege.

Slide

Wheel of power /privilege



Explain

The **Wheel of Privilege** is a tool that helps us visualise how different aspects of our identity—like race, gender, or class—affect our access to privilege. Each spoke represents a part of our identity, and depending on where we fall, we may experience privilege in some areas and disadvantage in others. By reflecting on our position in the wheel, we gain insight into how privilege works across different dimensions of identity and how these intersections shape our experience. This tool encourages us to think about how privilege impacts our lives and the lives of others in diverse ways.

Slide Activity: Power, Privilege and intersectionality

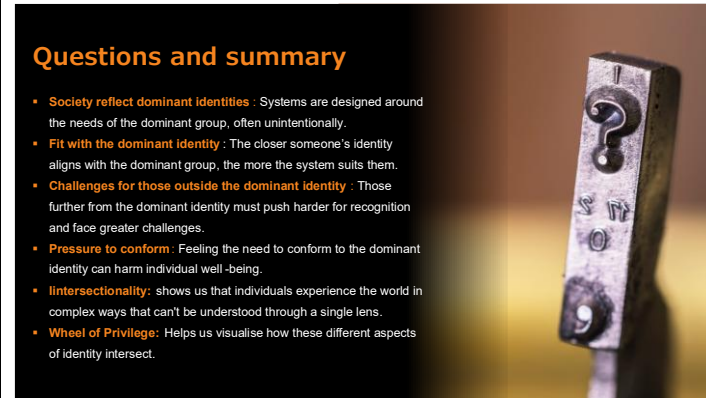
In your small groups, take a few minutes to reflect and discuss the following:

- What's one thing that stood out to you from the last few slides or video?
- Did anything challenge your thinking, or make you reflect differently on your own identity or experience?
- Why do you think this understanding is important in a workplace like ours?"

You don't need to answer every question—just let the conversation flow from what resonated most.

Explain

It's good to take the time to reflect on our own advantages and think about the disadvantages we and others experience.

Slide


Questions and summary

- **Society reflect dominant identities** : Systems are designed around the needs of the dominant group, often unintentionally.
- **Fit with the dominant identity** : The closer someone's identity aligns with the dominant group, the more the system suits them.
- **Challenges for those outside the dominant identity** : Those further from the dominant identity must push harder for recognition and face greater challenges.
- **Pressure to conform** : Feeling the need to conform to the dominant identity can harm individual well-being.
- **Intersectionality** : Shows us that individuals experience the world in complex ways that can't be understood through a single lens.
- **Wheel of Privilege** : Helps us visualise how these different aspects of identity intersect.

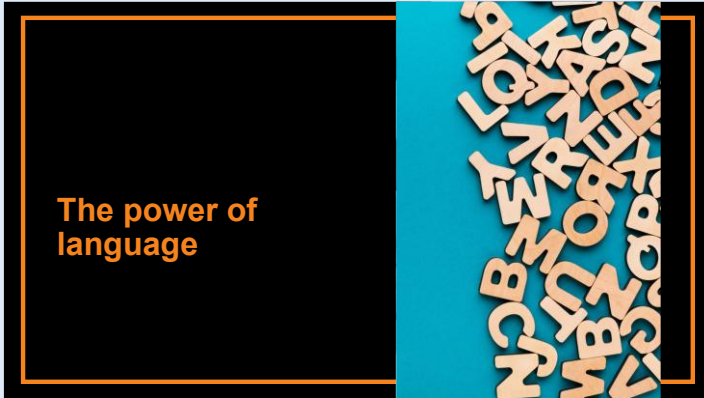
Session summary

In this section, we explored how society is shaped by dominant identities—systems often work best for those who fit that mould.

For those who don't, there can be real challenges: the pressure to conform, being overlooked, or having to work harder to be seen and heard.

We also looked at intersectionality—how our overlapping identities impact our experiences. The Wheel of Privilege helps us reflect on where we might hold advantage, and where we might face barriers.

The key takeaway? It's on all of us—especially those with privilege—to notice inequality and speak up when things aren't fair.”

Session The power of our words Learning objective Discuss the difference between intent and impact Session timings 0 hours 40 minutes Running total 2 hour 05 minutes	Session positioning This session focusses on the power of our words and how intent vs impact can affect those from under-represented groups. We will also explore the consequences of standing by and not challenging discrimination when observed. Slide  Explain Language is one of the most powerful tools we have for shaping our reality and influencing the world around us. The words we choose, whether intentionally or unintentionally, carry immense weight in how they are perceived by others. Language can empower, include, and uplift, but it can also harm, exclude, and reinforce stereotypes. In conversations about inclusion and equality, the power of language becomes even more significant. The way we speak about people's identities, experiences, and struggles can either help to dismantle biases or perpetuate them. Our words have the ability to challenge systemic inequalities or, if left unchecked, uphold the status quo. Understanding the power of language is crucial in creating a more inclusive and respectful environment, where everyone feels seen and valued.
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Slide

Self-Reflection

Take a moment to reflect on a time when someone said something to you that really **stopped you in your tracks**.

•Why did it have such an impact. Was it the wording? The context? The tone?

**Reflective Activity:** Stopping in Your Tracks**Introduction:**

We've all experienced moments when something someone said—whether intentional or not—made us stop in our tracks. It could be something that hurt, surprised, or even deeply resonated with us. These moments highlight just how powerful language can be.

Ask

Participants to take a moment to reflect on a time when someone said something to them that really **stopped them in their tracks**.

- Encourage them to think about **why** it had such an impact. Was it the wording? The context? The tone?

Sharing (Optional): Participants can briefly share their examples and how it made them feel. Explore where appropriate: What was it about the language used that made it so impactful?

Debrief:

Reinforce the idea that **language has the power to shape our emotions, beliefs, and interactions**, often in unexpected ways.

Slide (animated)**Intent vs impact**

**We judge others by
their actions and
ourselves by our
intentions.**

Ask

What is meant by this quote?

“We judge ourselves by our intentions and others by their impact”

Explain

It highlights the difference between how we view our own actions versus how others experience them. When we say or do something, we tend to give ourselves the benefit of the doubt, focusing on our **good intentions**. However, when we are on the receiving end, we focus on the **impact** of someone else's words or actions, which might hurt or offend us, regardless of their intent.

For example: if we say something that offends someone, we might respond by saying, “That wasn't my intention.” We expect this to smooth things over because we didn't mean any harm. However, good intentions don't erase the fact that harm has been caused.

The impact of our words or actions still affects the other person, whether we intended it or not. It's important to understand that **intent** doesn't negate **impact**, and being mindful of the impact of our words can help foster a more inclusive and respectful environment.

Slide (animated)

Intention vs impact

What can cause the difference between intention and impact?

- Diversity differences between those involved
- Prior negative or positive experience of the word / phrase
- Their perception of you, your values, your intention
- Their current physical and emotional state (stress, tiredness, distracted)
- Banter your version their version



Ask

What can cause the difference between intention and impact?

Suggested response

- **Diversity differences between those involved:** Our cultural backgrounds, lived experiences, and values can all shape how we interpret language. You could emphasise that things like language barriers or different cultural norms around communication can lead to misunderstandings.
- **Prior negative or positive experience of the word/phrase:** A word or phrase that may seem neutral to one person could trigger a strong emotional reaction in someone else due to past experiences. You could expand on this by mentioning that context matters, and words can have layered meanings depending on personal history.
- **Their perception of you, your values, your intention:** This is an important one. The relationship and trust between the speaker and the listener influence how a message is received. If someone

perceives you as trustworthy or kind, they might give you more leeway, whereas if there's less trust, your words might be interpreted more critically.

- **Their current physical and emotional state:** Stress, fatigue, or emotional distress can heighten sensitivity and make someone more likely to react negatively. You could also add that this works both ways—our own emotional state as speakers can affect how well we express our intent.

Slide



Explain

Language is constantly evolving, and terms that were once considered acceptable can become offensive as society becomes more aware of their harmful associations. It's important to recognise that this shift can happen for many reasons and not everyone may be aware of the changes.

Our goal should be to approach these situations with understanding and support, rather than condemnation, when someone unintentionally uses an inappropriate term.

Slide**Other forms of banter available****Explain**

Now that we've explored how our words can have unintended impacts, even when we mean well, let's talk about a form of communication that often treads this line—banter. In environments like the emergency services, where stress is high and 'dark' humour is common, banter can help people cope. But it's important to remember that banter should never come at the expense of someone else. There are ways to share humour that lighten the mood without leaving a victim at the end of the joke. In other words, **'other forms of banter available.'**

Slide**Banter**

Banter refers to playful, friendly, and often teasing conversation between people, typically involving jokes and light-hearted remarks. It is generally understood as good-natured and without malicious intent, meant to entertain rather than offend.



Ask

Banter, we have all heard of it, how would you define it?

Slide note

Banter refers to playful, friendly, and often teasing conversation between people, typically involving jokes and light-hearted remarks. It is generally understood as good-natured and without malicious intent, meant to entertain rather than offend.

Ask

How would you define bullying?

Slide**Slide notes**

Bullying: Repeated Behaviours that causes physical or emotional harm (intentional, hurtful, repetitive, involves a power imbalance)

Slide**Types of Banter****Friendly Banter**

- ❑ is a staple of a good workplace. Colleagues have harmless fun, and the jokes do not cause upset of any kind. Protected characteristics are avoided when making funny comments to colleagues.
- ❑ For example, 'You'd look really cool with a mohawk!'

Ignorant Banter

- ❑ is when a comment hurts someone's feelings without intention. This usually happens because somebody wasn't yet educated on a topic, and once they are, the situation is usually resolved with an apology.
- ❑ For example, 'I just love touching Sammy's afro hair!'

Malicious Banter

is when somebody makes a comment that knowingly humiliates and or hurts the feelings of someone else. This type of banter is really just bullying masquerading as a joke and is often done in a public setting.

For example: 'This is James, our resident Batty Boy!'

Source: www.yourdandi.co.uk

Slide Notes**Friendly Banter**

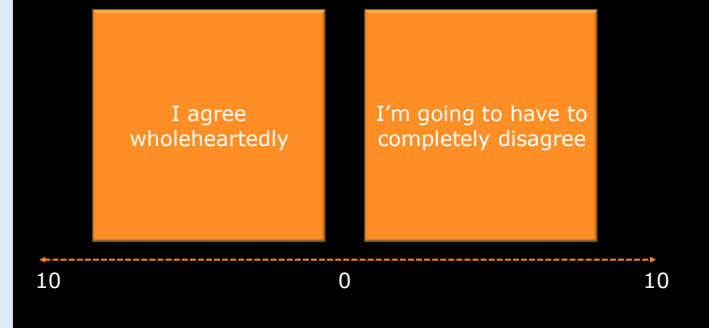
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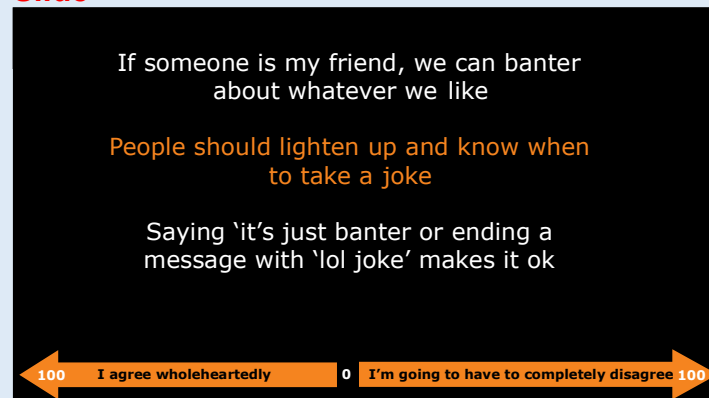
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 - For example: 'This is James, our resident Batty Boy!'

Slide**Activity: Agree / Disagree Spectrum****Explain**

On the next slide I have 3 statements, I will share three statement one at a time and what I would like you to do using the chat function state if you agree or disagree with the statements.

- We are going to use a 0-100% spectrum (100% being the highest)
- Type your response in the chat box

Slide

	Action Display the questions one at a time giving participants time to share in the chat function their score between 0-100% 1. If someone is my friend, we can banter about whatever we like 2. People should lighten up and know when to take a joke 3. Saying 'it's just banter or ending a message with 'lol joke' makes it ok Exploration Statement 1: "If someone is my friend, we can banter about whatever we like." ○ Why did you give that score? ○ How might your perspective change depending on the context (e.g., work vs. social setting)? ○ Is there ever a point where friendship doesn't justify certain kinds of humour? Explain This statement could spark a discussion on boundaries and whether being friends makes certain comments acceptable, or if lines still need to be respected. Statement 2: "People should lighten up and know when to take a joke." • Why did you give that score? • Is it possible for people to be both kind and funny without pushing boundaries? Explain This could lead to a conversation about individual sensitivities and whether it's fair to expect people to just "get over" potentially hurtful comments. Statement 3: Saying 'it's just banter' or ending a message with 'lol joke' makes it okay. • Why did you give that score? • Does adding 'just kidding' really erase the potential harm done?
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Slide Positive banter (8 min discussion – 5 minutes debrief)

Activity: Positive banter

- How can we ensure that banter in our team is always respectful and doesn't hurt or exclude anyone?
- What can we do if we notice banter is crossing a line?



Activity: Where do we draw the line between banter and bullying? Does the line even exist?

Explain

We have spent some time discussing key point about language, intent vs impact and banter, we are going to give you some time to discuss these points in a smaller group setting.

Action: Split the participants into small group of 4-5, spend 8 minutes discussing:

- How can we ensure that banter in our team is always respectful and doesn't hurt or exclude anyone?
- What can we do if we notice banter is crossing a line?

Debrief suggestions 8 minutes

- Ask a few volunteers to share key takeaways from their group discussions.

Summary of Banter

Banter doesn't have to be outright bullying to be harmful. What may seem like a joke to one person could have unintended impacts on another, especially when context and individual sensitivities are considered. It's important to recognise that language can be interpreted in different ways, and just because someone may use certain terms for themselves, it doesn't mean it's acceptable for others. Ultimately, humour should never come at someone else's expense, and we must stay mindful of its effect on everyone involved, including bystanders.

Slide

Questions and summary

- Language can have unintended impacts, even if well-intentioned
- Banter should always be respectful
- What might seem like a joke to one person could cause harm to another
- It's important to stay aware of shifting language norms
- Intent doesn't erase the harm caused
- Banter and bullying may overlap



Session Let's take action Learning objective Create an action plan Session timings 0 hours 15 minutes Running total 2 hours 20 minutes	Session positioning The final part of the session has been designed to support the attendees to create a plan of action, discuss what things we can all do day to day to ensure all of our colleagues feel they belong and are valued for who they are. Slide You belong, I belong, We belong  Explain Everyone wants is to have a sense of belonging, to be included and valued for their own individuality, and not to be judged for the difference they bring. Each one of us can have an impact on how everyone feels every day and it's up to us to take responsibility and show up for those who need us the most. The final part of the session will give you an opportunity to discuss actions you take to positively influence diversity and inclusion back in your own team.
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Slide**Activity: Let's take action**

- Based on what we've discussed today, what is one action you can take to create a more inclusive environment?
- How can you ensure your language and interactions are respectful and mindful of others



"The culture of any organisation is defined by the worst behaviours that are tolerated"

Steve Gruenert & Todd Whitaker

Facilitator note

Time allowing set this up as a breakout group

- Based on what we've discussed today, what is one action you can take to create a more inclusive environment?
- How can you ensure your language and interactions are respectful and mindful of others?

Explore

- Encourage participants to think about a simple, specific change they can make in their day-to-day interactions.
- Have them share their thoughts in small groups, and then bring everyone back to share a few key takeaways.

Slide**Session Tips**

1. Practice Active Listening
2. Challenge Biased Language and Behaviour
3. Use Inclusive Language
4. Reflect on Your Own Privileges and Biases
5. Be an Ally

Sources: Psychology today, Harvard Business Review, Catalyst, Deloitte Insights, McKinsey & Company

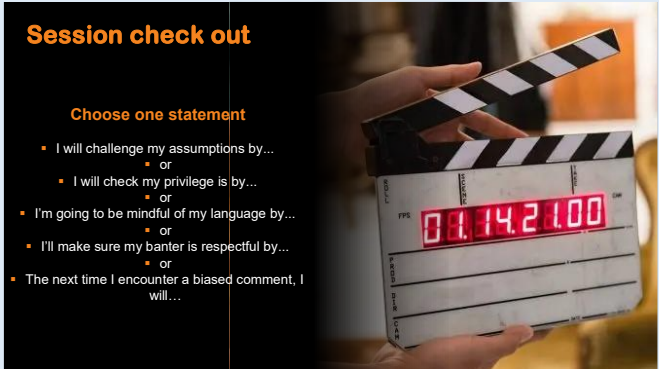


Explain (Read slide and challenge the group to be the change they want to see)

Here are a few overall tips on individual actions that can promote inclusivity in the workplace. These are drawn from best practices in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) research:

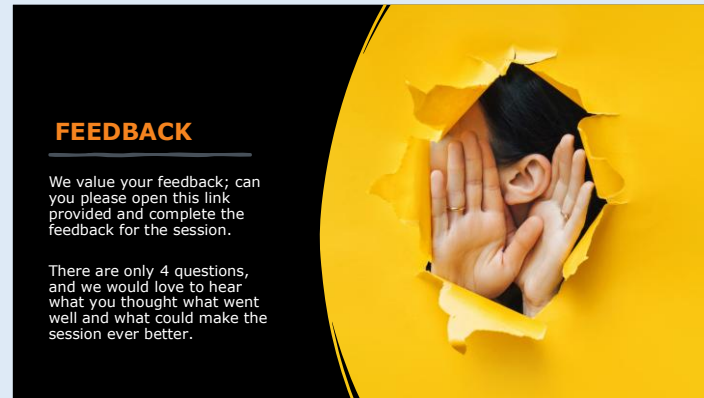
1. **Practice Active Listening:** Focus on understanding perspectives different from your own. Active listening fosters empathy and can make others feel valued and respected. Source: Psychology Today
2. **Challenge Biased Language and Behaviour:** Call out microaggressions or exclusionary language when you notice them, using respectful and constructive feedback. This can help shift the culture of your workplace. Source: Harvard Business Review.
3. **Use Inclusive Language:** Make a habit of using language that is neutral and respectful to all gender identities, races, abilities, and orientations. Ensure that your words do not reinforce stereotypes. Source: Catalyst.
4. **Reflect on Your Own Privileges and Biases:** Regularly engage in self-reflection to understand your own privileges and unconscious biases and commit to continuous learning. Source: Deloitte Insights.

	5. Be an Ally: Stand up for colleagues when you see exclusion or discrimination, even when it may be uncomfortable. Allyship is an active, ongoing process that involves supporting those from marginalised groups. Source: McKinsey & Company. Time allowing play the Inclusion Starts with I Video by Accenture https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2g88Ju6nkcg
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Session Feedback, summary, Close Session timings 0 hours 10 minutes Running total 2 hours 30 minutes Resources Feedback e-mail prepared and ready to send	Explain It's now time to check out of the session and before you go, select a check out statement. Slide  Session check out Choose one statement - I will challenge my assumptions by... - or - I will check my privilege is by... - or - I'm going to be mindful of my language by... - or - I'll make sure my banter is respectful by... - or - The next time I encounter a biased comment, I will... Checkout stateent options - I will challenge my assumptions by...or - I will check my privilege is by...or - I'm going to be mindful of my language by...or - I'll make sure my banter is respectful by...or - The next time I encounter a biased comment, I will... Action Copy and paste the link to our feedback site and ask the delegates to complete this prior to closing the session. https://forms.office.com/e/dc2VcreBCw
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Explain: We value your feedback, can you please open this link provided and complete the feedback for the session. There are only 4 questions and we would love to hear what you thought what went well and what could make the session ever better.

Slide



Thank the group and close the session.

Slide

