Diversity Booklet

This pack aims to help you, as a member of a college, school, work-based learning facility or as an individual:

- to understand the importance of diversity within an educational establishment

- to consider some of the common "truths and myths" around discrimination

- to successfully integrate new members of staff or new learners.

Equality and Diversity UK

Contents

Introduction

What is diversity?

People tend to use the words "equality" and "diversity" as if they were the same; however, the two words have different meanings.

Equality is when everybody can compete on equal terms and not be restricted because of their ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, race, culture, religion or belief, age or disability. These are protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (and previous Acts) and as such are protected by law.

Diversity is

"*The state or quality of being different or varied*"
http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/diversity

Diversity recognises individual and group differences and values and celebrates those differences. To fully accept diversity it is firstly necessary to understand the different needs and requirement of all individuals and to accommodate these needs and requirements in workplaces, colleges and schools.

This pack aims to help you, as a member of a college, school, work-based learning facility (WBL) or as an individual:

- to understand the importance of diversity within an educational establishment

- to consider some of the common "truths and myths" around discrimination

- to provide tips on how to successfully integrate new members of staff or new learners.

This pack also provides a selection of activities for learners, staff and governors of schools and colleges to help them challenge their own attitudes and consider how diversity can become an integral part of everyday life.

Section 1:   Getting everybody involved

The importance of involving everyone

Every school, college or work-based learning facility (WBL) is made up of a wide variety of people who perform a wide variety of roles within the establishment. Each of these people will have their own culture, needs or expectations within the organisation but all are needed equally for the whole establishment to run successfully. In order to achieve this, it is essential that each individual feels part of the whole and is able to participate in the life of the school, college or WBL organisation.

An organisation with a participation problem is like a car which breaks down frequently. Before setting off on a journey it is necessary to have every part of the vehicle in good condition, fit for purpose and working. The gearbox on a car sends instructions and power from the engine to the wheels. You wouldn't start a journey in a car which has a broken gearbox. A college, school or WBL provider cannot work properly if policy and procedures are not passed from the management to the staff to the learners and ultimately to the parents and carers.

When you set off on a journey you may believe that your car is bobbing along nicely, but everything can fail for a multitude of reasons. When it does fail it may take more than the driver to mend it.

The school/college/WBL placement provision may appear to be running smoothly if there are no crises but, as the engine of the car can quickly fail due to a multitude of reasons, the same can happen in college/school/WBL placements if the management does not value and reflect the diversity of the organisation. Staff and students may feel undervalued or excluded due to their special needs.

Whilst diversity is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, the benefits to be gained from a diverse organisation cannot be over emphasised.

We live in an increasingly diverse society and, because of this, diversity should be encouraged at every level of your organisation. The extent of your diversity should reflect the community which it represents.

Your school, college or WBL provision will have a number of areas where diversity can be addressed and encouraged. Being aware of different cultures and ethnicities in these areas, and making adjustments and allowances, can benefit not only the college, school or WBL organisation but also the staff, learners and ultimately the community.

Inclusion in school/college or WBL placement provision means valuing all members of the organisation.

What does inclusion in education involve?

Values	=	Valuing all learners and staff equally
Participation	=	Increasing the participation of learners in, and reducing their exclusion from, the cultures, curricula and communities of local schools, colleges and WBL provision
Adapt	=	Restructuring the cultures, policies and practices in schools, colleges and WBL provision so that they respond to the diversity of learners in the locality
Learning	=	Learning from attempts to overcome barriers to the access and participation of particular learners to make changes for the benefit of learners more widely
Differences	=	Viewing the difference between learners as resources to support learning, rather than as problems to be overcome
Rights	=	Acknowledging the right of learners to an education in their locality
Environment	=	Improving schools, colleges and WBL organisations for staff as well as for learners
Values	=	Emphasising the role of schools, colleges and WBL provision in building community and developing values, as well as in increasing achievement
Relationships	=	Fostering mutually sustaining relationships between schools/colleges and WBL providers and communities
Education = Society	=	Recognising that inclusion in education is one aspect of inclusion in society
Barriers	=	Barriers to participation and learning for individuals and groups usually involve multiple interacting factors rather than just one – a holistic approach

Section 2:   Accessing hard-to-reach groups

Involving hard-to-reach groups

Due to the differing roles and responsibilities within a school/college or WBL organisation, along with the diverse population which makes up each establishment, there will be an atmosphere which may be positive but could also be negative.

Groups develop their own perception of their identity, for example if the governors view themselves as the group which has overall control and knows what is best for the organisation, they are less likely to listen to the views of others, which will inevitably lead to a breakdown in communication and a lack of trust and respect from other groups.

The same will apply to staff, support staff and learners. If learners' views are not considered, there will be a lack of trust and respect for teachers and support workers.

For full integration to be successful, groups need to be appreciated, be motivated and have a sense of ownership

Without full integration, groups become irresponsible, apathetic and lazy

Some groups may be resistant to change. Older and more traditional staff members may be reluctant to accept the ideas of younger, newer staff. People of similar cultures or religions tend to establish cliques. If you are trying to change things, and make the group more participative, you need to deal with the 'in' and 'out' groups.

Great idea

Not

Change
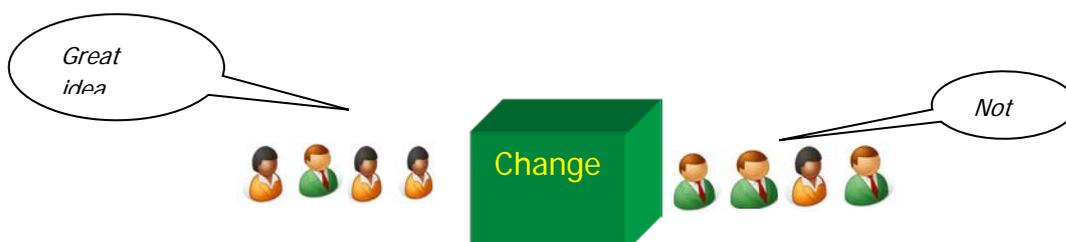
Section 3:   What is discrimination?

Types of discrimination

Direct discrimination

This is when a person is directly discriminated against. An example would be an advertisement placed for staff stating that only Welsh candidates need apply, which is illegal under the Equality Act 2010, whereas an advertisement asking only for staff who could speak Welsh would be legal if it was a requirement for the job.

Indirect discrimination

This is a much more subtle form of discrimination. An example would be when meetings or out of hours clubs are held at the same time/day on each occasion thereby restricting people who may have care/religious commitments at this time. When the timetable for clubs is being negotiated, consideration should be given to the needs of the staff and learners.

Positive discrimination and positive action

Positive discrimination

This is when a college, school, WBL placement provider or other employer excludes applications from particular groups in order to increase the representation from under-represented groups.

Examples

- Excluding applications from all but Black Caribbean people in order to increase the representation of this group on the payroll

- Giving candidates from discriminated-against groups extra points during selection procedures

- Only recognising harassment on the grounds of race or sex

Section 4:   Anti-discriminatory practice: Disclosure

Responding to disclosure

People's circumstances or combination of circumstances are rarely the same. Even visible differences may be misleading. You can usually tell that a person is black but you cannot tell if they are gay. On the other hand a person may appear to be pregnant when they are not.

Disclosing disabilities and differences is not always an easy matter and frequently causes anxiety and nervousness. If the interviewer, whether that be a teacher, tutor, governor, mentor, support worker or student, reacts to the disclosure, it will not improve the situation and will usually make matters worse.

The situation can be relieved if consideration has already been given to diversity. New learners can be given the opportunity to discuss their needs before they begin attending school, college or their WBL placement. New members of staff or staff with changing needs can be given the opportunity to discuss their needs in a non-threatening environment if they wish to do so or to complete a form if they find this more acceptable. However, there will always be some member of staff or learner who feels embarrassed disclosing their needs until they feel more settled and secure within the school, college or WBL organisation. For these people it is important that their experience of disclosure is a positive one; consequently the response of the person they are disclosing to will be very important.

An experienced interviewer (colleague, manager, teacher, tutor, mentor, support worker or peer) will:

- have seen and heard everything, or at least act as if this was the case

- acknowledge what the person has said without reacting adversely to the disclosure

- not make in-depth comparisons with other people or offer explanations of where they stand on the issue

- not minimise the disclosure by saying "so what"

- not give the impression that they feel sorry or empathetic.

Section 5:   Truths and myths

The effects of stereotyping

When working with diverse groups within your college/school/WBL organisation it is important not to resort to stereotyping: each person is different.

For example, when looking at staffing for particular groups, the member of staff should be chosen for their ability to provide the best education for the learners in that group and not because you imagine that they would get on well together purely and simply because the majority of the learners and a member of staff are from a particular ethnic group. It may be the case that this member of staff is the most appropriate, but it has to be for the right reasons.

Stereotypical behaviour, particularly in the identity of groups, is often deliberate which can lead to wrongly formed perceptions. This could be demonstrated when women dressing in suits and ties or boots and braces are perceived to be gay. When producing resources it is important to avoid these stereotypes as not all the learners will want to be associated with certain groups.

It is understandable when learners feel isolated because they can't relate to images or situations. The group will also find it difficult to relate to scenarios or tasks that only focus on one group of society. A balance needs to be struck so that all learners feel included.

It is important to establish the fact before reaching a conclusion.
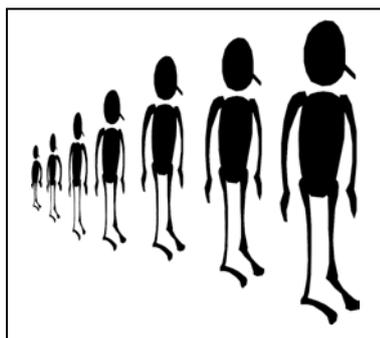
Generalisations and long term usage

Generalising should be avoided when using resources. Traditional examples of stereotyping are that all Jewish people or Scots men are frugal or 'tight fisted'. Whilst some Jews or Scots may be – to use a euphemism – 'careful with money'", many are not. Likewise there are people of other cultures and nationalities which would fall into this category.

Section 6:   Activities

About the activities

This pack provides activities for learners, staff and governors of schools and colleges to help them challenge their own attitudes and consider how diversity can become an integral part of everyday life. These activities are designed to help participants:

- understand the importance of diversity within an educational establishment

- consider some of the common "truths and myths" around discrimination.

They include five **ice-breaker** activities (Activities 1–5) that can be used before starting the main activity to:

- generate a friendly and relaxed atmosphere

- motivate the participants for the task ahead

- get the participants into the right frame of mind

- stimulate the group to work together more effectively.

It is important to select an icebreaker that fits in with the type of contribution that you want from the participants in the main activity and the ice-breakers provided in this pack are particularly effective for preparing the participants to consider the issues associated with diversity.

There are also five activities for use with staff and governors (Activities 6–10), activities for use with learners (Activities 11–15) and five review activities (Activities 16–20)

The following icons are used within this Section:

  Main and differentiated activities

  Information or explanation

  Practical tips and advice

Ice-breaker activities

Activity 1:   Seats

Aim

To demonstrate the effect of exclusion from a group

Preparation

- Before the group members arrive, put out enough chairs for approximately half to two-thirds of the group
- Provide A2 or A3 sheets of paper and pens.

Activity

1. As the group members arrive, stand by the doorway and greet each person. Randomly ask some of the participants to take a seat and others to stand at the side of the room.

   (Care must be taken to ensure that the selection of individuals is random and not a result of any personal perspectives.)

2. Once all the participants have arrived, introduce yourself (if necessary) and welcome everyone to the meeting/class.

3. Ask the seated participants to record on the sheets provided how they feel about the venue and the greeting they have received.

4. Ask the standing participants to record how they feel.

5. Once the comments have been written, display the sheets at the front of the room. It will then be possible to compare the lists.

   It should become evident that the participants with seats feel more relaxed and welcome than the standing participants.

6. Facilitate a discussion of why some people felt excluded and unwelcome. Explain to the participants that members of the school/ college/WBL organisation could feel the same if they are made to feel different because of their particular needs.

Differentiation

This activity can be used with governors or staff as an introduction to diversity training.

In class it may not be possible to remove sufficient chairs or discipline problems could arise when learners try to push others from the seats. The activity can be adapted for larger groups by depriving one section of the group of one item.

For example:

1. If all the learners are seated, ensure that one group has all the equipment they will need (paper, pens, Blu-tack) while another group has at least one of the items missing.

2. Ask them to write their names on the paper provided. When the group without the pen/paper asks for or comments that they do not have pens/paper, tell them to use their own or find some.

3. Once this has been done, facilitate a discussion about how the group without pens/paper felt when they were told to find their own.

4. Create a list of the positive responses from the group with the pen/paper and a list of the negative responses from the rest to illustrate the negative emotions created by unfair treatment.

5. Explain how learners can be made to feel excluded from lessons for a number of reasons and that all of these reasons are usually because the learners have different needs.

Special needs

For learners with English as a second language or learners who demonstrate literacy difficulties, an emotions board could be used. This is a series of illustrations that portray different emotions, each represented by an illustration of a facial expression.

Emotions

sad

angry

accepted

surprised

afraid

rejected

aware

happy

Activities for staff and governors

Activity 6:   Disability Discrimination

Aim

To raise awareness of inclusion in schools

Preparation

- Cards with scenarios printed on (all the scenarios provided are taken from real life situations)

Activity

1. Staff or governors are asked to sit in groups of 4 or 6 depending on the number participating.

2. Each group is then handed a selection of cards containing various scenarios.

3. Each group is asked to study the scenarios and answer the following questions in relation to each one:

    - Do you consider this to be discrimination?

    - What would a reasonable adjustment be?

    - What would be considered good practice?

4. Allow 15 minutes for the groups to read the cards and decide on their responses.

5. Draw the group back together and facilitate a discussion of their responses.

Scenarios

1. A prospective learner uses a wheelchair to get around and is applying to get a place at your college. The learner wants to study science and the labs are on the first floor. The college hasn't got a lift. Travelling to an alternative school/college is really difficult and expensive. The college refuse to install a lift.

2. A 16-year-old learner is diagnosed with gender dysphoria. The learner has adopted a male name by Deed Poll. The school allows a change of name in its records but refuses to use any male pronouns with regard to this learner. This greatly distresses the learner.

   Source: http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/guidance-for-education-providers-schools/providing-education-and-access-to-any-benefit-service-or-facility/how-do-i-avoid-discriminating-in-the-provision-of-education-and-benefits-services-and-facilities/

3. A school won't allow a learner who is HIV positive to take part in physical education lessons as they fear that if he is injured he will be a risk to other learners.

   Source: http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/guidance-for-education-providers-schools/providing-education-and-access-to-any-benefit-service-or-facility/how-do-i-avoid-discriminating-in-the-provision-of-education-and-benefits-services-and-facilities/

4. A school carries out regular monitoring and evaluation of its data on exclusions for learners with protected characteristics, and finds that a disproportionately high number of learners who are either temporarily or permanently excluded are black boys and learners with a learning difficulty.

   Source: http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/guidance-for-education-providers-schools/exclusion-from-school/how-do-i-avoid-discriminating-in-relation-to-exclusions-from-school/

5. A learner with ADHD is excluded for his behaviour including refusing to sit at his desk, distracting other learners by talking and running around during classes. The learner has been cautioned previously and the school does not see any other option than to exclude him.

   Source: http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/guidance-for-education-providers-schools/exclusion-from-school/you-must-not-discriminate-against-a-pupil-by-excluding-them-from-school/

Activities for learners

Activity 11: Snakes and Ladders

Aim

To raise awareness of diversity within the establishment

Preparation

- Provide card, drawing implements and a list of positive and negative comments

Activity

1. Welcome learners to the session. Explain that they are going to make a board game for younger learners to play.

2. Divide the learners into small groups and encourage them to 'thought shower' advantages and disadvantages faced by minority ethnic groups.

3. Ask them to create a board game on the same lines as snakes and ladders but with each square at the bottom of a ladder containing a positive comment (advantage), and each square at the top of a snake containing a negative comment (disadvantage).

   Suggested positive comments could include:
   - supportive local community
   - being allowed to work
   - having job opportunities
   - having skills that are in demand
   - finding permanent accommodation
   - legal recognition as an ethnic group
   - local business community interested in products
   - financial support from educational foundations.

   Suggested negative comments could include:
   - unemployment crisis worsens
   - racial attack on hostel
   - passport and documents lost in bureaucracy
   - work found with criminal employer
   - critical statement in press about police investigations

4. When the board games are complete, the groups could swap games and then play the game they are given.

5. As a plenary, bring the group back together and facilitate a discussion to consider the obstacles faced by people from minority ethnic groups and the positive impact that diversity can have on their lives.
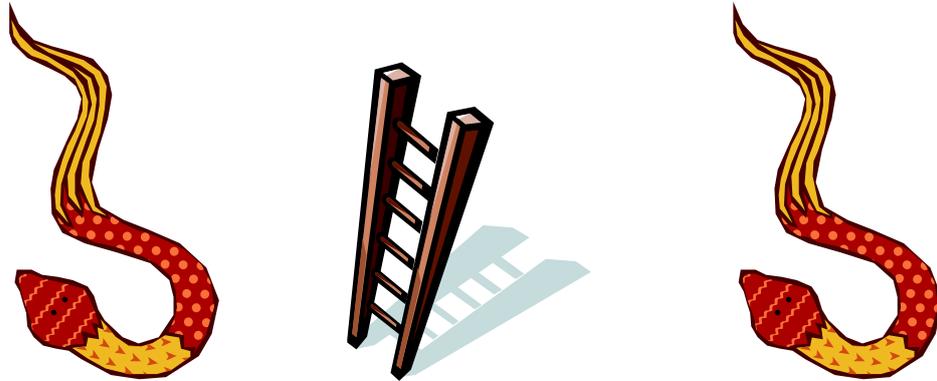
Differentiation

For learners experiencing literacy or fine motor difficulties, a board already containing the numbered squares could be provided. The snakes and ladders could be printed on a separate sheet for the learner to cut out and paste on to the board.

Statements could be written by support staff into speech bubbles and then pasted into the appropriate places.

Session review activities for learners, staff or governors

Activity 16: Produce a Quote

Aim

To review the learning gained from the session

Preparation

None

Activity

Ask the participants to come up with a one-line quote to sum up the session. It could be their own interpretation of diversity or something they have heard during the session that has explained or clarified diversity for them.

Activity 17: Pair Share

Aim

To review the learning gained from the session

Preparation

None

Activity

Give each participant one minute to think about the session then ask them to pair up with a partner and share their views of the session. They could then share these views with the rest of the group.