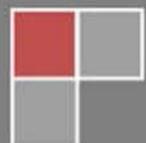# Diversity Booklet

This pack aims to help you, regardless of your status as a manager, an employee or volunteer:

- to understand the importance of diversity within your particular environment
- to consider some of the common "truths and myths" around discrimination
- to successfully integrate new team members.

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 organisations.

This pack aims to help you:

- to understand the importance of diversity within your setting
- to consider some of the common "truths and myths" around discrimination
- to provide tips on how to successfully integrate new service users or staff.

This pack also provides a selection of activities for a diverse range of users 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 organisation 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 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. An organisation/service provider cannot work properly if policy and procedures are not passed from the management/leaders to the staff.

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 organisation 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 the working environment if the management does not value and reflect the diversity of the organisation. Groups and individuals may feel undervalued or excluded due to their specific 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 organisation 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 organisation but also the staff and ultimately the community.

Inclusion in service and provision means valuing all members of the organisation regardless of their background/characteristics.

What does inclusion involve?

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

Inclusion is a sense of belonging: feeling respected, valued for who you are; feeling a level of supportive energy and commitment from others so that you can do your best work."

Section 2: Accessing hard-to-reach groups

Involving hard-to-reach groups

Due to the differing roles and responsibilities within an organisation, along with the diverse population which makes up each organisation, 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 committee 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 employees and service users. If users' views are not considered, there will be a lack of trust and respect for employees

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.

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 events 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 events is being negotiated, consideration should be given to the needs of the diversity of groups and individuals in the workplace and communities.

Positive discrimination and positive action

Positive discrimination

This is when an employer, organisation/service provider 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

Positive discrimination is illegal

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 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 staff can be given the opportunity to discuss their needs before they begin work. New members of staff or existing 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 people who feel embarrassed disclosing their needs until they feel more settled and secure within the 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 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 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 support for people in that group and not because you imagine that they would get on well together purely and simply because the majority of the 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 everyone will want to be associated with certain groups.

It is understandable when individuals 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 everyone feels included.

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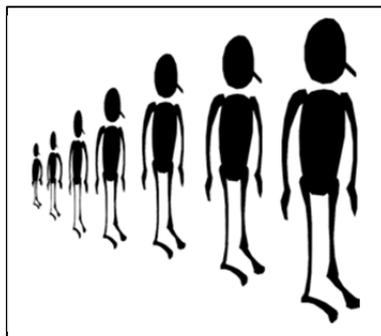
Generalisations and long term usage

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 all to help challenge attitudes and consider how diversity can become an integral part of everyday life. These activities are designed to help individuals and teams:

- understand the importance of diversity within an the workplace and work related environments

- 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 a diverse range of staff (Activities 6–10), activities for use with others (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 individuals in the organisation could feel the same if they are made to feel different because of their particular needs, culture, background and or experience/s.

Differentiation

This activity can be used with everyone as an introduction to diversity training.

In the workplace it may not be possible to remove sufficient chairs or discipline problems could arise when delegates 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 participants 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 delegates can be made to feel excluded from lessons for a number of reasons and that all of these reasons are usually because the delegates have different needs.

Special needs

For participants with English as a second language or those 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 learners

Activity 11: Snakes and Ladders

Aim

To raise awareness of diversity within the workplace

Preparation

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

Activity

1. Welcome delegates to the session. Explain that they are going to make a board game for a diversity of individuals to play.(all ages)

2. Divide the delegates 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 other sectors

   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.

Session review activities

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.