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Let's be clear about EDI

Manager's Team Meeting Conversation Guide 1

October – December 2020

nottingham.ac.uk/edi



Introduction

This guide has been created as part of the 'Let's be clear about EDI' campaign, which is running across the University from October 2020 to April 2021. This campaign includes a range of activities to help us understand and explore more about Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). As a University we want all staff, as well as students and visitors, to be clear that we are striving to achieve a fully inclusive culture. In order to succeed in this, people need to know what this means and how their actions and reactions makes a difference to how we achieve this together.

As a manager, your role in creating this inclusive culture is essential. Being able to talk about EDI matters with your team; role modelling inclusive behaviour; and calling out or challenging inappropriate behaviour is part of your management responsibility. Sometimes there are no easy answers, although listening to other's perspectives can go a long way towards developing understanding.

This guide therefore provides a starting point for a shared conversation across the University that will be happening at local levels. All managers, at all levels, across all job families, are being invited to use this guide to support specifically focused EDI conversations. This way we can listen to and understand each other's perspectives and learn together about some of the foundational elements of EDI as a University.

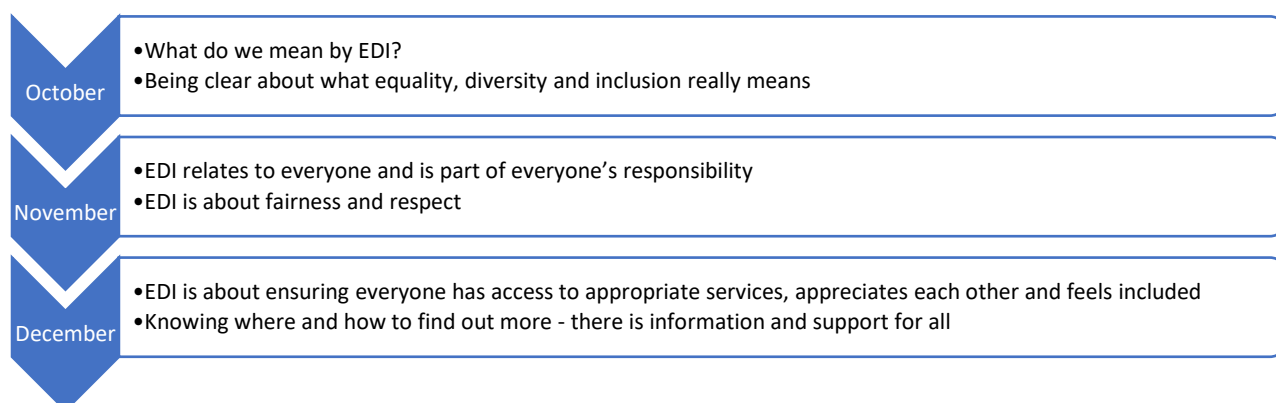
Team conversations

By using this guide, you will be able to support a team conversation cascade. By adding '**EDI conversation**' to **the start of a team meeting agenda** between October and December initially, and then January to April for the second set (you'll receive a new guide for this), you will be encouraging honest conversations about EDI matters. As a guide you should allow 20-30 minutes for this conversation. Set up a separate team catch up if you need to, if that fits better with your timing. A list of suggested questions, prompts and information is provided in this guide to support discussion around the core messages you should be focusing on.

You may need to adapt your approach slightly dependent on the level of prior knowledge around EDI matters within your team. However, the messages in this guide have been specifically chosen as it is recognised that they can sometimes be taken for granted, and not everyone will be familiar with them. Be assured, you are not expected to be the expert on EDI, just to help facilitate conversations, and steer the discussion to ensure key messages are understood, whilst being part of the learning process yourself.

At a glance guide to conversation themes

Each month focuses on a specific aspect of understanding the basics around EDI. Take time to focus on the questions for that month, prior to progressing and building on the conversation the following month.



Pre-meeting considerations

- Ensure that group participants have information about where they might go for support after the meeting or how they might access support, should they need it. Support might be informal discussion with family, friends, colleagues etc. More formal support might be with a line manager, mentor, coach or counsellor.
- Ensure you have links to reporting mechanisms and participants are clear about what does or does not happen with any concerns raised at the meeting (for example, any individual experiences might have to be reported separately – ensure staff know who to speak to, alternatively any wider concerns might be acted on and taken forward – ensure you know how you will take these forward).
- Ensure staff know how they can raise any further issues after the meeting.

During the meeting

It is important to set and agree some working principles for the meeting. For online meetings it's useful to start off with pre-prepared principles and ask if anyone has anything further to add.

Here are some things you could include:

- All opinions, varied perspectives, and concerns should be heard and respected by everyone, even if you do not agree. Whilst all views, questions and comments are welcomed, everyone should be mindful of the impact of their words on others.
- Be respectful and take care to phrase your thoughts professionally and collaboratively. Respect will be key for these discussions.
- Discrimination, verbal or emotional aggression will not be tolerated inside or outside of the meeting. If you observe behaviour that you feel is inappropriate, then let the individual know that this in a polite and professional way, or ask what their intent was behind their comment or action so that a better shared level of understanding might be achieved.
- The details of conversations held should remain confidential. Any notes from the meeting will outline any actions and decisions, but not reveal personal views or information. For information, please see [Chatham house rules](#).
- Focus on the topic at hand and avoid raising other concerns.
- Use the raise hands function on Teams and ensure everyone is muted until the chair invites you to speak.
- Ensure that everyone knows they can share as much or as little as they would like.

Post-meeting considerations

- It is important to offer after-care when discussing sensitive and personal topics and to remind attendees of UoN reporting mechanism. Here are some support options:
 - [UoN Counselling Service](#) - anyone who needs support following a discussion and who would prefer this to take place in the context of a 1:1 appointment can complete a registration form and request an appointment with a counsellor.
 - [Report an EDI issue](#) – provides information for staff on the university's Dignity at Nottingham Policy, how to report an EDI issue and details available support. Staff should ideally talk to their line manager in the first instance.
- Ensure that any updates or information requests are followed up after the meeting and communicate with attendees in a timely manner.

Meeting conversation guide - October

EDI stands for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

1. Invite your team to share what equality, diversity and inclusion means to them, how each differ and how they link together. You also might like to watch this [short 1 minute video](#) together.
2. Consider discussing some of the points below with the team:

Equality is about:

- Ensuring that everyone is given **equal access** to resources and opportunities to utilise their skills and talents
- Taking a systems approach to what we do and how we do it and identifying and **removing longstanding, structural barriers** to success
- Understanding that people have different levels of **disadvantage and privilege**
- Recognising that, because not everyone starts from the same place, **treating people equally may not equate to treating everyone the same**

Diversity is about:

- Being **reflective** of the wider community
- Having a diverse community, with **people from a broad range of backgrounds represented** in all areas and at all levels

Inclusion is about:

- A university wide approach where groups or individuals with different backgrounds are **welcomed, culturally and socially accepted, and treated equally**
- Engaging with each person as an individual and **making colleagues feel valued**
- A sense of belonging that is **respectful of people** for who they are as individuals and within a team
- **Feeling supported** to enable us to do our best at work

3. Invite the team to discuss what the benefits of equality, diversity and inclusion are.

Discussions should cover some or all of these points:

- **Attract and retain the best quality staff and students**, recognising that a positive culture seriously matters to staff and students
- **Create more positive working relationships**, resulting in more productive, engaged and focused teams
- **Improve productivity within your team**, energising individuals to bring their whole self to work
- **Increase performance**, leveraging efficiency and effectiveness with inclusive working practices
- **Appeal to a wider audience**; a better culture attracts a wider range of people
- Take a more innovative and creative approach; varied knowledge and experiences broaden our insights
- **Be stronger in the face of new challenges**, because diverse leadership leads to stronger performance

4. Consider and agree what actions you can take as a team, and as individuals, based on your conversations.

Meeting conversation guide - November

EDI relates to everyone and is part of everyone's responsibility

1. Consider with your team how EDI is already considered and included in team activities, and where the team could do more? Are there action plans you could strengthen based on your discussions?
2. Invite team members to share how they currently include EDI considerations within their role on an individual level, is there more they could do?

Discussions should cover some or all of these points:

- A recognition that in any role and in any team, what we do and how we do it will always have an **impact on people**.
- This includes the **role** we carry out and the way in which we **conduct** ourselves.
- The importance of **understanding the needs, perspectives and experiences** of people different to ourselves, enabling us to identify and address potential barriers.
- Even working within predetermined systems and processes it is still our responsibility to **identify, highlight and address inequalities**.

EDI is about fairness and respect

The university strategy places importance on fairness, respect and inclusivity and states:

In all we do, we value...

- **Inclusivity** - We are a community where everyone can contribute and be appreciated for who they are.
- **Ambition** - We set the highest standards for ourselves and our work and support each other to achieve them.
- **Openness** - We adopt a straightforward and transparent way of communicating with each other and with the world, championing the free exchange of ideas.
- **Fairness** - Our decisions and actions are consistent, impartial and ethical.
- **Respect** - We have regard for each other's rights and feelings, and demonstrate this in our behaviour, treating each other with kindness.

1. Have a conversation with the team about fairness. The following questions may be helpful:
 - What does fairness mean to you?
 - Do we all have the same opportunities? How might our opportunities differ?
 - What is our role in creating a fair place to study and work?
2. Have a conversation with the team about respect. The following questions and prompts may be helpful:
 - How can we demonstrate respect in our professional working environment?
 - How can we show respect when our opinions differ? Consider the importance of listening skills and being open to learning new perspectives.
 - Discuss what skills can be used when differences in views and perspectives emerge. Consider the LMA resources '[Having conversations about EDI](#)' in helping to establish an inclusive mindset.

Consider discussing and sharing the following LMA interactive module:

- [Inclusive Mindset](#)

3. Consider and agree what actions you can take as a team, and as individuals, based on your conversations.

Meeting conversation guide - December

EDI is about ensuring everyone has access to appropriate services, appreciates each other and feels included

1. How can we ensure that any updates with regards to services and support are cascaded amongst the whole team to ensure that everyone is included? Consider what your current communication channels are e.g. team meetings, newsletters, emails.
2. Consider possible barriers that students and staff may face when accessing services, e.g. lack of knowledge and awareness, physical access requirements etc.
3. How can we work together to help to address the barriers that staff and students may face in accessing services? Which current action plans and activities can you enhance?

There is information and support for all

The Leadership and Management Academy and Professional Development provide EDI learning and resources for staff. There is also a wide range of information on EDI related activity and initiatives on the university's [EDI webpages](#).

1. Ask your team if they are aware of the pathways through which they can raise any issues, including talking to you as their line manager? There are also EDI contacts for raising issues of fairness and equality within faculties and professional service departments, including the Directors of EDI, EDI Leads, EDI Coordinators and other relevant EDI Leads in your area.
2. Ask your team if they are aware of relevant support services such as Dignity Advisors, Counselling Service, Mental Health First Aiders and disability support.
3. Ensure that staff are aware that they can talk to their line manager(s) and access support confidentially, and that they can signpost others to these services, where appropriate.

You may wish to share the following links:

- EDI contacts and information
 - [EDI webpages](#) - Up to date information on EDI projects and priorities, staff networks, resources and EDI news at UoN
 - [Leadership and Management Academy](#) – EDI Learning and Resources
 - [Professional Development](#) – Course in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
 - [Meet the EDI Coordinators](#)
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- Individual advice and support
 - [Dignity Advisers](#) – SharePoint site listing trained members of staff who provide impartial and confidential advice to support staff and students who have issues/concerns regarding harassment, bullying or victimisation.
 - [Counselling Service](#) – offers support to staff as well as students, including one-to-one support, group sessions and self-help resources.

4. Talk about how you can continue to ensure staff know how to find this information when they need it.

Next steps

Consider ensuring EDI conversations continue within the team by ensuring EDI remains a topic of discussion and is considered in all areas of new or developing work. You may also wish to invite team members to raise future EDI concerns with you and amongst the team, and to continue developing their understanding of EDI, including accessing [EDI Learning and Resources](#) via the [Leadership and Management Academy](#) and [Professional Development](#).

From January 2021 to April 2021 messaging will continue with messages that explore EDI in more depth, as below. Further guidance will be provided.

The next EDI messages you will be invited to explore with your teams are:

- EDI is about everyone, not just specific groups – sometimes individual characteristics aren't visible
- There is information and support for everyone so we can all work to ensure staff and students achieve their potential
- EDI is part of everyone's responsibility, and strengthening diversity and inclusion makes us more effective
- EDI is about fairness and respect, although it's not about treating everyone the same

This guide has been created by the Leadership and Management Academy and the EDI Coordinators team as part of the 'Let's be clear about EDI' campaign for University of Nottingham staff.

