

Common diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) terminology

Here are some of the terms you can expect to come across in this mahi.

Implicit bias (Unconscious bias):

Unconscious attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions towards individuals or groups. These biases often operate without conscious awareness and can influence behaviour.

Microaggressions: Indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalised group.

Intersectionality: The interconnected nature of multiple social identities, such as race, gender, class, and sexuality, and how they overlap and intersect to create unique experiences of discrimination or privilege.

Allyship: Actively supporting and advocating for individuals or groups who face systemic disadvantages, using one's privilege and influence to promote equality and justice.

Cultural competence: The ability to understand, appreciate, and effectively interact with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, demonstrating respect and avoiding cultural biases.

Cultural sensitivity: Being aware, respectful, and mindful of the cultural differences and nuances of individuals and communities and avoiding actions or behaviours that may cause harm or offense.

Systemic oppression: Discriminatory practices, policies, and structures embedded within society that systematically disadvantage certain groups, perpetuating inequality and limiting opportunities.

Privilege: Advantages or benefits that certain individuals or groups have based on their social identities, such as race, gender, or socioeconomic status.

Power: Having the ability or authority to make decisions and/or exercise control over other individuals or groups. People with privilege are often in a position to use power over others who are less privileged.

Inclusive leadership: Leadership that fosters a culture of inclusion, where diverse perspectives are valued and integrated, and all individuals feel empowered to contribute and succeed.

Dimensions of diversity

Dimensions of diversity refer to the different characteristics that individuals bring to the workplace, which can impact their experiences and perspectives. These dimensions can include but are not limited to:

Race: Refers to a person's physical characteristics, such as skin colour, and the associated social and cultural identities. It involves ethnic backgrounds, skin colour, and ancestral origins.

Ethnicity: Encompasses cultural practices, language, religion, nationality, and traditions shared by a specific group. It's more about cultural identity than physical attributes.

Gender identity: Describes a person's internal sense of their gender, which might align with the sex assigned at birth or differ from it. It includes identities such as transgender, non-binary, genderqueer, etc.

Sexual orientation: Relates to an individual's emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to others. It includes identities such as heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, etc.

Age: Signifies the number of years a person has lived, but also encompasses generational differences, experiences, and perspectives. Age diversity

acknowledges the value of different life stages.

Socioeconomic status: Refers to an individual's social standing, often determined by income, education, occupation, and access to resources. Socioeconomic status influences opportunities and access to services.

Cultural capital: The knowledge, skills, and behaviours that individuals acquire through upbringing, education, and exposure to culture. Class diversity acknowledges disparities in cultural capital, impacting social interactions and opportunities.

Ability/disability: Encompasses physical, cognitive, sensory, or mental health differences. It includes visible disabilities (e.g. mobility issues) and invisible ones (e.g. chronic illnesses, learning disabilities).

Religion/belief system: Represents an individual's faith, spirituality, or belief system, which influences values, traditions, practices, and cultural norms.

Language: Encompasses the languages spoken by individuals, including their primary language and any additional languages they may speak or use.

Cultural background: Includes customs, traditions, behaviours, and norms learned and shared within a specific group or community.

Nationality: Refers to the legal relationship between an individual and their country of citizenship, which may differ from their ethnic or cultural identity.

Work experience/education: Varied educational backgrounds, career paths, and professional experiences that individuals bring to a workplace or community.