

Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) Principles

What is the purpose of these EDI principles?

The purpose of the EDI principles is to ensure that none of our Creative Ed International examination candidates, prospective students or course participants are advantaged or disadvantaged because of personal characteristics that are not relevant to the constructs assessed in our products and services.

Whilst in our assessments to discriminate between candidates based on their performance is in relation to the assessed content, we do not want personal characteristics that are irrelevant to the product/service to affect candidates' performance and results. These personal characteristics that are protected by the UK equality legislation are also known as "protected characteristics" (Equality Act 2010) and include:

- Age
- Disability
- Race (including ethnicity)
- Gender reassignment
- Sexual orientation
- Religion or belief
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Sex

In addition to the list above our EDI principles also include socio-economic status to help ensure that candidates from all backgrounds are represented across our assessments.

Our mission statement

"To promote equality, diversity and inclusivity through positive representation in our assessment materials."

These principles should be used alongside accessibility principles and initiatives to help ensure that our assessment materials, activities and courses are as inclusive as possible.

We appreciate that no single piece of assessment material can be completely representative of all backgrounds and demographics without potentially introducing unnecessary context or compromising our accessibility principles or an assessment's validity or reliability. We will endeavour to achieve our mission statement for assessments across a range of series and components.

When/where should the EDI principles be applied?

These principles are applicable to all assessment and programme materials.

Equality, diversity and inclusivity (EDI) principles for assessment materials.

The EDI Principles

Each individual in the assessment material production process has a responsibility to incorporate the following EDI principles into the process to:

- Ensure equality, diversity and inclusivity is considered at all stages of our assessment material production process.
- Make sure our assessment materials are fair and inclusive over the course of the product lifetime.
- Celebrate diversity to prevent discrimination and eliminate prejudice in all of our assessment materials.
- Appreciate the diverse abilities, needs, identities and backgrounds of our candidates.
- Provide ongoing support to our staff and our Assessment Specialists to enable them to confidently apply these principles.
- Encourage the sharing of best practice across exam centres, examiners and teacher training to embed equality, diversity and inclusivity into all of our products.
- Establish and maintain a monitoring process that enables us to understand where we need to improve and are making progress and where we need to improve in relation to the principles.

By applying the above EDI principles to the assessment material production process we aim to produce assessment material that:

- Includes diverse perspectives and sources, and recognises cultural and lifestyle backgrounds of our candidates
- Is contemporary and relevant to our candidates.
- Reflects the reality of our diverse global society to promote positive attitudes.
- Create equally positive experiences of assessment for all candidates.
- Does not promote, explicitly or implicitly, prejudicial views.
- Allows candidates to perform at their best and achieve their full potential.

Why is this important?

Through our assessment materials we have direct contact with candidates, so it is important for us to understand who those candidates are, where they come from and what their backgrounds are.

For example in the UK the latest accurate figures (pre-pandemic) show that:

- In 2020, 32.2% of secondary school pupils were from minority ethnic backgrounds (Office for National Statistics, 2021)
- In 2019, 1.4 million people aged 16 years and over identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual in the UK, an increase from 1.2 million people in 2018 (Office for National Statistics, 2021). In 2018, the Government Equalities Office tentatively estimated that there were also approximately 200,000–500,000 transgender people in the UK (Government Equalities Office, 2018).
- In 2019, there were 212,000 same-sex couple families in the UK, a substantial increase from 152,000 in 2015 (Office for National Statistics, 2021).
- In 2020, approximately 8% of children in the UK had a disability (Department for Work & Pensions, 2021).
- In 2019, there were 4.2 million children living in poverty in the UK according to the Children’s Commissioner (2020). This number has increased by 600,000 since 2012 and is projected to rise to 5.2 million by 2022 (Social Mobility Commission, 2020).

We must also be mindful of intersectionality, and that the above statistics refer to discrete populations. Social categories interlink, and many of our candidates will fall under two or more of the above categories. For example, in 2019 15.7% of Asian people and 15.2% of Black people were living in the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods in the UK, whereas this is true of only 9.0% of White people (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2020), demonstrating a link between minority ethnic backgrounds and poverty.

Feelings of exclusion and discrimination, and stigma because of a disability, gender, race or sexual orientation can seriously impact on young people’s mental health and wellbeing. This can be reinforced by the feelings that they are under-represented in teaching and assessment materials.

As example, in the UK according to Ofsted (2021) schools should:

- “Promote equality of opportunity and diversity effectively. As a result, pupils understand, appreciate and respect difference in the world and its people, including the things we share in common across cultural, religious, ethnic and socio-economic communities”
- “Prepare pupils for life in modern Britain effectively, developing their understanding of the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and”

- “Promote an inclusive environment that meets the needs of all pupils, irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation”.

Creative Ed international view these suggestions as being important globally both in terms of a young person’s wellbeing and performance, and that candidates feel represented and have themselves reflected in the assessment material that they are presented with. It is also important that the work of schools in promoting equality, diversity and inclusivity is recognised and reinforced by the assessments that we offer to our candidates.

We believe that the ambitions of the EDI aims for assessment crossfire over into ALL areas of work, programme and experience provided by Creative Ed International globally.

Unconscious Bias

What is unconscious bias?

Bias is a prejudice in favour of or against a thing, a person, or a group compared with another, usually in a way that’s considered to be unfair. Biases may be held by an individual, a group, or an institution. Biases can be for or against any personal characteristics, for example race, ethnicity, disability, gender, socio-demographic status and age i.e. the protected characteristics outlined previously and more.

Our unconscious biases are a result of our own life experiences and everyone holds views or beliefs about others that are outside of our conscious awareness. Circumstances under which we often work, including multi-tasking and working under pressure, can increase the potential for our unconscious biases to affect our judgement. This could lead us to include, or not identify, stereotypical views in the assessment materials that we are writing or reviewing.

Forms of unconscious bias include, but are not limited to:

- **Affinity bias** e.g. because you read and enjoy articles from a particular website, this is your ‘go to’ for material to include in assessment, limiting its diversity.
- **Confirmation bias** e.g. your own experience of teaching in a particular context, where candidates have been effectively engaged, may not reflect how well the whole cohort will engage with the same context if used in assessment material.
- **Conformity bias** e.g. you agree to leave a question as written, despite having concerns, because others in the process feel it is fit for purpose and you don’t want to be seen to ‘rock the boat’.
- **Contrast effect** e.g. you reject an idea for a scenario as it looks different to what has been included previously, rather than judging it on its own merit.
- **Gender bias** e.g. protagonists portrayed in gender-stereotypical roles.

- **Halo effect** e.g. not flagging an item that you think has issues as everything up to that point in the assessment has been of very high quality.

By being aware of unconscious biases, we can be mindful of our own and look to recognise when/where they have become prevalent in the setting and quality assuring of assessment materials. Setting aside dedicated and uninterrupted time to write or review assessment materials will also help to prevent unconscious biases from impacting the equality, diversity, inclusivity and overall quality of the assessment materials we make available to our candidates and participants.

Ways to improve EDI, avoid stereotype and remove bias in assessment materials Examples of stereotype and bias may include (but are not limited to):

- More male protagonists in positions of power (e.g. male manager vs female receptionist).
- A tendency towards regional names.
- Industrious, working classes
- Age-related stereotypes (e.g. old needing to be cared for and young as the carers; old as having lots of free time, young having very little free time).
- Traditional nuclear family stereotypes.
- Lack of representation of disabled people in contexts and imagery.

Ways to address bias and stereotyping:

Only use contexts and scenarios where they are required. If they are required:

- Consider a range of sources or media outlets when researching stimulus materials.
- Set contexts in a range of geographic locations with a range of socio-economic demographics.
- Have a fair balance of gender specific, gender-neutral and ethnically diverse names
- Have a fair balance of genders, races, ethnicities, ages, disabled/non-disabled and cultures of characters portrayed in images.
- Use age and culturally appropriate contexts where they are required
- Use culturally diverse contexts and avoid colloquialisms.
- Use gender-neutral pronouns where possible (they, them, their).
- Use gender-neutral titles and job roles where possible
- Avoid negative stereotypes where possible.
- Be mindful of behaviours, practices and beliefs linked to different religions, faiths and cultures to avoid causing any unintended offence or distress when creating fictional contexts.

Glossary of terms

Bias – a prejudice in favour of or against a thing, a person, or a group compared with another, usually in a way that's considered to be unfair.

Cultural – relating to a particular society or group, and its ideas and customs.

Disability – a physical or mental condition that limits a person's movements, senses, or activities.

Discrimination – the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people.

Diversity – 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.

Equality – the right of different groups of people to receive the same treatment.

Ethnicity – A term that refers to the social and cultural characteristics, backgrounds, or experiences shared by a group of people.

Fair – treating people equally without bias, prejudice or discrimination.

Gender – Gender refers to the characteristics of women, men, girls and boys that are socially constructed. This includes norms, behaviours and roles associated with being a woman, man, girl or boy, as well as relationships with each other. As a social construct, gender varies from society to society and can change over time. Gender identity refers to a person's deeply felt, internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond to the person's physiology or designated sex at birth.

Inclusivity – the practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or [marginalised](#), such as those having physical or intellectual disabilities or belonging to other minority groups.

Minority ethnic group – in the UK, this refers to all ethnic groups that are not White British e.g. Black Caribbean, Pakistani, Asian, Gypsy.

Prejudice – preconceived opinion that is not based on reason or actual experience.

Race – groups that people are often divided into based on physical traits regarded as common among people of shared ancestry.

Socio-economic – relating to or concerned with the interaction of social and economic factors.

Stereotype – recognising, respecting and accepting differences along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age,

disability, religious beliefs, or other ideologies, cultural tradition, the fact or state of belonging to a social group that has a common national identity. Often expressed in terms of masculinity and femininity, gender is largely culturally determined and is assumed from the sex assigned at birth.” (Stonewall 2021)

Intersectionality - the practice of trying to include many different types of people and treat them all fairly and equally. “the theory that the overlap of various social identities, as race, gender, sexuality, and class, contributes to the specific type of systemic oppression and discrimination experienced by an individual” (dictionary.com) the social standing or class of an individual or group. It is often measured as a combination of education, income and occupation, a widely held but fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing.

Conflict of Interest Guidance

A YouTube video presentation of this guidance is available on the following link.

<https://youtu.be/yW-TYe78IM0>

What is a conflict of Interest?

A conflict of interest arises when an examiner or activity provider has someone with whom they have a family, personal, or professional relationship) is in a position to make an inappropriate personal gain, whether financial or non-financial, from undertaking an assessment task.

This does not mean that such a gain will necessarily be sought by the person but to protect the integrity CEI need to be able to identify whether or not a conflict of interest exists.

Examiners, consultants and management committee members are required to declare if they have, or do not have, a conflict of interest. Our responsibility is to identify, manage, and take reasonable steps to mitigate the risk of a conflict leading to an adverse effect on the assessment or our reputation.

We would only prohibit an examiner or course leader from undertaking a task when necessary. Our preferred approach is to risk-assess conflicts and put in place appropriate mitigations to allow the task to be completed.