EDI Toolkit: Inclusive Behaviours Guide

There are lots of ways to be more inclusive and role model inclusive behaviour. This page summaries why role models are important and how you can become more of a role model.

Role Models

How to be a role model

The term "role model" can be quite intimidating. Some may associate it with the expectation of perfection, but that is not the case. A good role model is not expected to be perfect, but instead, they are open to learning when they make mistakes. This toolkit is essentially a guide for helping you to become a role model.

Why do role models matter?

Role models are important for a number of reasons.

1. Role models provide inspiration for others – you can't be who you can't see.

2. Role models are important for setting the standard at an organisation to show what behaviours are acceptable. For example, if they call out an inappropriate microaggression, it may encourage others to do so in the future.

3. Role models have the ability to influence the culture. In the context of research culture, we need to see leaders model the behaviours necessary to influence and change culture for the better.

A common barrier individuals face to engaging with EDI is that they think "engaging with EDI is not my job – there's an EDI team for that." In fact, it's everyone's responsibility to advocate for an inclusive work environment, especially leaders in a position of power and influence. Leaders are ultimately role models. Those joining the institution will be looking to leaders in the organisation for acceptable behaviours. They set the tone for the working environment and have the opportunity to role model inclusive behaviours.

How can you become more of a role model?

You may think, "there's very little I can do to be an inclusive role model" but there's lots you can do! Little things can go a long way that could make a big difference. Being inclusive is about being mindful. Are you scheduling meetings at times that are convenient for everyone (not at school drop off or pick up times)? Do you call out sexist comments? Do you ensure that no one is interrupted when speaking in meetings and that all voices are heard?

Listed below are 10 ways that you can **role model inclusive behaviours**. Work through the list and think about what you can start doing now to model inclusive behaviour within your teams.

10 ways to role model inclusive behaviours

1. **Understand issues that could hold your team members back.** For example, imposter syndrome or unconscious bias, and how it impacts marginalised

groups. The **Accessibility Guide** will make you aware of ways you can ensure all colleagues can access meetings or content. This can be used by anyone, but does have some specific content for colleagues at Newcastle. You can find various resources online relating to improving accessibility too.

2. **Listen and learn from the experience of others.** Follow a diverse range of voices to understand different perspectives. Collaborate with different people. Get to know your team members to understand their needs and how you can support them effectively.

3. **Be an ally**. Call out inappropriate behaviour to set the standards of the environment. Be mindful of microaggressions which may look like passing comments. Don't wait for the victim to react, step in as soon as you witness the discrimination. Head over to the **Allyship Guide** to help get you started.

4. **Acknowledge your own privilege.** Being an ally requires you to recognise your [privilege](). We all have privilege but it is up to us to go beyond our comfort zone, engage in conversations and share the advantages we have.

5. **Take responsibility for your own learning.** Don't rely on others to educate you. Find out what policies and facilities are available to support your colleagues, such as breastfeeding facilities or gender-neutral toilets. Working through the pages of this toolkit on the nine **protected characteristics** will develop your understanding of the challenges people face with suggested resources to learn more and advise you of what support is available here at Newcastle.

6. **Understand the value of diversity.** Understand the positive impacts that diversity and inclusion can have in teams and for the quality of research.

7. **Be open to feedback**. If someone comes to you, either verbally or by email, be sure to acknowledge their concerns. If it is criticism, don't get defensive, but try to understand their perspective and learn from what they have to say. Learn from mistakes. Everyone makes mistakes when learning about something new. It's uncomfortable, but inevitable. Just apologise, learn from the mistake, and move forward. If someone points out a mistake, thank them for letting you know and let them know that you will do better next time.

8. **Be mindful of the language you use**. Language is always evolving, so take time to learn what terms are acceptable/unacceptable. Acknowledge when you may have used the wrong language then learn from this and move on. Head over to the **Language Guide** to help get you started. You can also find out about the [inclusive language work]() happening at Newcastle.

9. **Take action and be visible in your support.** For example, wear a Rainbow lanyard and share your pronouns, so you can be identified as a visible ally.

10. **Don't make assumptions about people.** It can be easy to make assumptions about someone without realising but it's important to try and challenge your way of thinking and those assumptions. For example, don't assume that a team member who has recently got married to their partner is now planning to start a family.