



Equality Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit

Module 1 Introductory Module

Contents

Following the guidance on how to use the toolkit, this Introductory Module has three parts

How to use the EDI Toolkit

1.1 Introduction to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

(in this booklet)

This is for everyone, and should be considered before other modules.

- **Opening worship**
- **EXPLORE** (key information, learning points and activities)
- **EXTEND** (for further study or personal reflection)
- **Closing worship**
- **Appendices**
 - Activities and answers
 - Glossary
 - Preparation tasks for other modules
 - Acknowledgements

1.2 Theological Reflections on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

(published separately)

This is for everyone and should be used before other modules.

1.3 The Law

(published separately)

This is for those with leadership or management responsibilities, or who have responsibility for employees, office holders and volunteers.

- **Opening worship**
- **EXPLORE** (key information, learning points and activities)
- **APPLY and REFLECT** (case studies)
- **EXTEND** (for further study or personal reflection)
- **Closing worship**

How to use the EDI Toolkit

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Toolkit can be used in a variety of ways. Although it is laid out in modules, do not feel restricted by these in how you use the toolkit. Some ideas are given on page 6.

1 What is it?

There are seven main modules, two enrichment modules and, importantly, the Theological Reflections on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Introductory Module

Module 1.1	Introduction to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Module 1.2	Theological Reflections on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Module 1.3	The Law
Module 1.4	Unconscious Bias

Equality themes

Module 2	Age
Module 3	Class and Economic Justice
Module 4	Disability and Impairment
Module 5	Gender
Module 6	Race
Module 7.1	Sexual Orientation
Module 7.2	Welcoming Same-Sex Couples and their Families

Apart from Module 1.1, each module contains the following elements:

Opening worship

EXPLORE Introductory information and activities to use in a group session.

APPLY and REFLECT The core of the toolkit featuring anonymised but real case studies. These help participants discuss and think through how equality issues impact on real lives, while considering what the Church and local churches can do about them.

EXTEND Additional resources for further study or personal reflection.

Closing worship

Appendix For ease of reference, the activities and answers, together with some other resources that are referred to in the Explore section, have been put into the Appendix.

2 Who is it for?

Most of the toolkit is suitable for any level of church life, from leadership teams to house groups and continuous learning for preachers and worship leaders.

Module 1.3 (The Law) has been specifically designed for those who have leadership responsibilities, office holders and people with responsibility for employment or legal matters.

Module 7.2 was designed at the request of the Conference in 2014, to help local churches consider how to welcome same-sex couples and their families, but can have a broader application.

3 How long does it take?

If you are considering using the toolkit as a course, the following timings are recommended:

Organise your time over several weeks or even months, as the whole toolkit takes 14-15 hours to complete over eight or nine sessions.

Modules	Welcome	Worship	EXPLORE	APPLY and REFLECT	EXTEND and preparation	Worship
1.1 Introductory Module (2 hrs)	10 mins	10 mins	60–90 mins	n/a	Minimal	10 mins
1.2 Theological Reflections	The Theological Reflections can be considered as part of the EXPLORE section of 1.1, in which case you should allow an extra 20 minutes. Alternatively, it can be provided in advance for personal study.					
1.3 The Law (90 mins)	5 mins	10 mins	30 mins	30 mins	Minimal	10 mins
1.4 Unconscious Bias (90 mins)	5 mins	10 mins	30 mins	30 mins	Minimal	10 mins
2 Age 3 Class and Economic Justice (75 mins each)	5 mins	10 mins	20 mins	30 mins	Minimal	10 mins
4 Disability and Impairment 5 Gender 6 Race (90 mins each)	5 mins	10 mins	20 mins	45 mins	Minimal	10 mins
7.1 Sexual Orientation 7.2 Welcoming Same Sex Couples and their Families (100 mins each)	5 mins	10 mins	30 mins	45 mins	Minimal	10 mins

4 Organising a session – notes for leaders

It is recommended that you complete either Module 1.1 (Introduction) and/or Module 1.2 (Theological Reflections) first. In the suggestions below, you will see an alternative idea about spending time in theological and biblical reflection before considering other modules. Other than that, the modules can be completed in any order. It is a good idea to start with something that is relevant to the local context, or which most people can relate to, such as age or class/economic justice.

Choose a relaxed venue, and provide refreshments. Tables or café-style seating will help with group discussions. In Module 4 there is an access audit template which may help organisers identify and plan for any disability access requirements.

Welcome

In your first session, take some time to explain how you have organised the sessions. How long, when, where, etc.

At all sessions make sure that people know each other. If there is anyone new attending, be sure to introduce them to the rest of the group. Most sessions include an activity which could be an icebreaker, so it isn't necessary to do an icebreaker activity in the welcome slot.

Worship and pastoral concerns

Suggestions for worship have been included. Do not feel limited to these. The time spent in worship before and after is vital to embedding learning in the familiarity of Church life. Be aware that some sections of the toolkit can be emotionally challenging and that pastoral support may be necessary. You may want to have a separate space for worship, which could also be used as reflective space if anyone needs to take time out.

Explore

The Explore sessions are designed to give a general overview, and include activities and opportunities for discussion and reflection. Be careful not to let these over run.

Apply and reflect

The case studies are the core element of the toolkit – and a large proportion of time should be given to them. They are anonymised but real situations, which have been selected because they help participants to discuss the challenges of achieving equality and inclusion in church life. The questions are designed to guide people to think about not only what they have learnt, but about what they could do.

Leaders/facilitators should make sure that they bring any resources from this Introductory Session, such as the SCIP (structural cultural institutional personal) classification and glossary, to all sessions. Leaders/facilitators should read the Extend section in advance, which may help with questions that arise in group discussions.

Extend

Extend resources are largely provided for personal reflection away from group sessions. However, some people enjoy getting into detail, so it is worth considering offering additional sessions for deeper study.

Preparation

At the end of Module 1.1 is a list of preparation ideas for subsequent modules. Make sure people know at the end of each session what they need to consider and/or do before the next session.

5 Other ideas

You don't have to do this as a course. Here are some other ideas.

Start with Scripture and theology

The Theological Reflections document has been agreed by both the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and the Faith and Order Committee. It can form a good foundation for Bible study or house group discussions. Resources from the toolkit can be selected to support study.

Build learning into worship

Select elements of the toolkit that could be used in worship, or meetings. Once they are familiar with the resources, ministers, local preachers and worship leaders should be able to adapt toolkit resources. The case studies, in particular, could work well in café-style worship; think about how they fit with Scripture and/or other contemporary issues.

Build learning into existing activities

Use the resources over a longer period of time in house groups, local preachers' meetings and CLPD (continuous local preacher development). How about using selected resources and activities from the toolkit when designing Lent courses? Partner some resources with a topic or film on an equality theme.

Use the toolkit for regular reference

Don't just do a course and forget the resources. Keep the toolkit to hand for personal reflection and practical use, or for solving a particular EDI issue in your church.

REMINDER

Theological reflections on EDI

A 'Theological reflections on EDI' document is provided separately. All participants should have a copy of this when they attend their first session. It does not need to be considered in detail every time, but participants should be introduced to it at least once, and should be made aware that this is the starting point for all our work on EDI issues in the Methodist Church.

Module 1.1

Introduction to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Contents

Opening worship

EXPLORE

1. Outline of the session
2. Activity: Same - fair - different - equal
3. Equality, diversity and inclusion background
4. Equality, diversity and inclusion in a faith-based context
5. Exploring language and communication
6. Summary

EXTEND (for further study or personal reflection)

1. How discrimination happens
2. SCIP classification
3. Cultural awareness

Closing worship

Appendices

Activities and answers

Glossary

Preparation tasks for other modules

Acknowledgements

Opening worship

Let us build a house where love can dwell [All are Welcome]

Singing the Faith 409

Jesus the True Vine

John 15:1-17

Prayer

Holy God, before ever you made us, you loved us.

Nor has your love ever slackened, nor ever shall.

In love all your works have begun, and in love they continue.

In this love our life is everlasting, and in this love we shall see you and be glad in you forever.

Amen.

(Julian of Norwich)

EXPLORE

1 Outline of the session

The purpose of this session is to give you an overview of what equality, diversity and inclusion are, with particular reference to the context and understanding of Methodism in Britain. Later modules will explore issues across a range of 'equality dimensions' (ie age, gender, race, sexual orientation, disability and impairment, social justice, class and poverty). At the end of this module, participants/learners would be expected to have a general sense of the context of equality, diversity and inclusion.

This understanding should be about more than laws and rules. It should be about the diversity of identities among the human family, and about our capacity as Christians to live together in graceful relationship as people who are all beloved by God. To paraphrase Romans 12:1-2, we are not being '... conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewal of our minds and bodies by the Holy Spirit.'

This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Toolkit is designed to support the discipleship and mission of the Methodist Church and enrich the life of the Church. The toolkit has been designed in consultation with the Connexion's EDI Stakeholder Forums, and draws from the theological tradition of Methodism.

The EDI Toolkit is in nine modules, plus the theological reflections. Whilst it would be possible for someone to work independently, in order to benefit from sharing with others it is recommended that all modules are completed through group work and with a facilitator.

The starting point for the EDI Toolkit is not the equality legislation, though of course equality legislation is an important part of the UK context of contemporary Methodism and will be included as appropriate. Instead, this toolkit seeks to equip Methodists to go beyond legal compliance. It is based on the principle that all humankind is made in God's image, and therefore worthy of dignity and respect.

Case studies and stories play a central role in the toolkit as they evidence real experiences, positive and negative. The stories demonstrate how issues arise through different people's life experiences. They help us to understand the pain of isolation, patterns of exclusion and inclusion, oppression, discrimination, joy, hope and fear.

By sharing these case studies, we hope to encourage reflection, understanding and change on everyone's part. Above all, however, we hope to encourage the unheard and marginalised to challenge our human prejudices and aid in the ongoing journey where we are all still being changed into God's likeness.

2 Activity 1: Same – fair – different – equal?

Activity

Working in pairs or small teams, consider Activity 1 (see Appendix). Someone from your team needs to provide feedback to the whole group. Remember to respect the confidentiality of the information that people provide about their experiences. When working in pairs or teams you need to agree what is to be fed back.

Learning points

The purpose of the exercise is for you to explore the fact that deciding what is right and equitable is not a simple choice. It is more complex and requires people to make an informed judgement about what is right. Reflecting on a circumstance where we felt we had been 'left out' helps us to understand that inequality and discrimination have practical and emotional impacts.

3 Equality, diversity and inclusion – background

There is a great deal of legislation and legal history, case law etc, around equality, diversity and inclusion. Whilst this toolkit will give a general overview of the legal points, it is important to remember that as a Church, Methodism seeks to be inclusive as part of its understanding of and response to the grace of God.

The law may set out an individual's civil rights and entitlements, but the Methodist Church's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is not a reaction to the law, but part of our response to God and our understanding as a Church. Please refer to the theological reflections on equality, diversity and inclusion, which are provided as a separate document.

Here are some points to consider about equality, diversity and inclusion:

Equality

- Equality does not mean 'everybody being the same'.
- It is about recognising that everybody is different, yet treating everyone with an equal level of respect and ensuring they have equal access to employment, education and training, goods, services and facilities.
- To treat people equally, therefore, is not to 'treat them all the same' but to ensure that we acknowledge and respect 'difference' and the need that arises from it, so that no one is excluded on account of what is considered 'normal'.
- However, equality is also about not applying stereotypes (pigeonholing people based on false assumptions), which leads to people's gifts, skills and talents being overlooked.
- Achieving equality, therefore, requires us all to learn where differences matter – eg where people may need additional support because of the disadvantages they have faced in life. We must also learn where differences should be disregarded – eg where people need an equal opportunity, but don't need additional support. This requires respectful listening to each other's perspectives and experiences and being prepared to acknowledge and disregard some of our own traditional assumptions.

Diversity

- The promotion of diversity is about recognising, respecting, valuing and drawing on the positive aspects of differences. Having diversity fosters an environment that recognises the contribution every individual makes or can make to society, Church, an organisation, business or community. It promotes dignity and respect. It gives expression to the commonly shared values that help bind us together as Church and society, whilst recognising our individuality.
- Many of us are familiar with the golden rule of 'treat others in the way you would like to be treated'. This is a sympathetic approach, but it can make the assumption that we are all the same. However, Matthew 7:12 – "In everything do to others as you would have them do to you" – is set in the wider context of the Gospel. It recognises the particular needs and diversity of gifts of God's people. So, by embracing diversity it is sometimes said that we aspire to a 'platinum rule'. This is where we 'treat others with empathy', and seek to understand their experience and particular needs in relationship to others.

Inclusion

- A first step in inclusion is for each of us to understand our own identity in its different parts and layers. We must also have a sense of God's loving attention to us in all our parts as we negotiate who we are in our various contexts. This includes family, household, work, public life and church.
- Inclusion is about recognising that not everyone has had the same life chances and opportunities and that some of us may need help and support to be able to take advantage of the opportunities that others among us may take for granted.
- Inclusion is also about recognising that some people have faced discrimination or disadvantage in life. They have been excluded, while others have had privileges of which they may not even be aware. Recognising the need for inclusion, in Church terms, is sometimes called offering a 'radical welcome'. This means taking extra steps to ensure that people are not only included, but that they feel the Church's intention to include them.

Theological Reflections on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Theological Reflections on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) are included as a separate document (Module 1.2), which was agreed by the EDI Committee and the Faith and Order Committee in November 2015. The introductory sections to the theological reflections are set out below:

1. It is the Church's intention to value every human being as part of God's creation and the whole people of God. At the heart of the Methodist community is a deep sense of the place of welcome, hospitality and openness, which demonstrates the nature of God's grace and love for all. Our church communities are called to be places where the transformational love of God is embodied and life in all its fullness is a gift which is offered to all people. There are no distinctions based on race, gender, disability, age, wealth or sexuality, or any discrimination associated with this gift. Yet, it is important to recognise that this does not mean there are no boundaries or limits to the Church's inclusivity and hospitality. The boundaries which exist in the Church enable it to remain faithful to its identity as the Body of Christ and to seek to be a safe space for those who participate in its communal life. Ever open to the revelation of God, the Church (with prayerful discernment) continues to reflect on where these boundaries appropriately lie and how it embodies the love and grace of God. God loves all people unconditionally, and we seek to live out that unconditional love in every part of church life.
2. Issues of equality, diversity and inclusion, though critical in both contemporary theological reflection and the witness of the Church, cannot be derived easily from the Bible. The Bible is the record of God's dealings with humankind, consisting of narratives through which we discern God's nature and purposes. This means that theological ideas emerge in particular cultural contexts, though they are not necessarily bound by them. One cannot easily extract principles from isolated incidents or sayings. The Bible is not specific on matters of equality, and contains stories of discrimination against people, of enslavement, sexual violence against women and the equating of disability with sin. Yet we can also discern broader themes emerging from the narratives that issue a severe challenge to these stories. Recognition of the challenges involved in interpreting Scripture, alongside recognition of the rich resources it provides, leads not only to the need for continuing study and reflection regarding issues of equality, diversity and inclusion but also to the need for challenge where the inappropriate use of Scripture leads to discriminatory attitudes and practices. Nonetheless, themes emerge from the biblical narratives that offer guidance for the Church's engagement with contemporary culture.

3. The traditions and history of the Church reveal changing perspectives and consensuses over the inclusion or exclusion of particular peoples in different ways and for different reasons. Often the Church has not spoken with a single voice. There are biblical passages that deal with God's election of particular people, and the Church's views on slavery and the ordination of women, for example, have seen considerable change. Therefore, the Church's collective understanding of God's purpose and truth has changed over time. The Church is a pilgrim Church. We expect that Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience will continue to reveal truth as the Methodist people reflect on these issues in all areas of Church life and as part of their discipleship. The following strands of biblical, Methodist, and the broader Christian thought offer some resources for further reflection.

(Continued on page 3 of Module 1.2.)

4 Equality, diversity and inclusion in a faith-based context

As an introduction to this section, use Activity 2 (see Appendix)

(This is a quiz with answers provided in Appendix 2)

Learning point - Methodism has developed its understanding of equality and diversity over time. It has changed some of its views and sometimes has to live with contradictory convictions.

Here are some Methodist approaches to understanding and developing equality, diversity and inclusion.

A. Living with Contradictory Convictions

The term 'Living with Contradictory Convictions' comes from a report to the Methodist Conference in 2006. It encouraged reflection on the theological implications of being a Church that must live with or contend with mutually contradictory convictions. The Church has dealt with many issues in the past that have caused fundamental differences of view, or even division. Yet we are called into unity. Sometimes these differences of view have been for theological reasons and sometimes they have been in relation to ethical questions. Often it has been possible to reach agreement on these theological or ethical differences. For example, the question of ordination of women to presbyteral ministry has been answered in the Methodist Church, with men and women having equal status and access to all levels of ministry. Similarly, there were once differences of view on the ethics of slavery and apartheid. However, these have been answered in terms of the views of the Church, with all forms of racism being considered a denial of the gospel, and the value of the individual no longer subject to economic preferences.

At other times we have continued to live with differences in our convictions. For example, there are a wide range of views on matters such as alcohol, pacifism and financial ethics.

For some issues, there is a mixture of agreement and disagreement. For example, attitudes to sexuality vary. The 1993 Methodist Conference resolutions on human sexuality include a commitment to recognise, celebrate and affirm lesbian and gay people in the life of the Church (resolution 6). However, the traditional teaching of the Church on human sexuality was also reaffirmed: namely, chastity for all outside marriage and fidelity within it (resolution 4). The Methodist Church also considers homophobia to be wrong. However, there is a wide range of views when it comes to considering whether the Church should revisit its definition of marriage to allow same sex marriage in Church. These differences of view also extend to wider issues around human relationships and marriage, including attitudes to cohabitation and remarriage after divorce. It must be recognised that the Church – both as an institution and in the diversity of its people – continues to live with contradictory convictions. However, it is also important to work together, as members of the body of Christ, to listen and discuss prayerfully to try to resolve differences, and not passively 'agree to disagree'. But some matters may remain matters of disagreement.

In 2006, the Methodist Conference Report 'Living with Contradictory Convictions' set out how the Church lives with, and has tried to resolve, contradictory convictions, considering Scripture, in the light of tradition, experience and reason.

A copy of the report can be found online:

www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/Conf06_Faith_and_Order_committee_pt2.docx

There is also a study guide on the Methodist Church website:

www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/co_living_with_contradictory_guide_0707.doc

Principles to consider when dealing with situations where there are contradictory convictions include:

- **Openness to each other** – openness in the way we relate to each other; listening, sharing and learning from each other's experience and understanding.
- **Openness to God** – openness to a challenging God.
Is God challenging our views and perceptions?
Is God revealing something new to us? How can we know?

Note: *Challenging Conversations: A worship resource to support Living with Contradictory Convictions*
This resource is produced by *ROOTS* for Churches, in partnership with the Methodist Church. You will find it later in this toolkit.

B. The Methodist quadrilateral

Methodists traditionally use a fourfold approach to learn about our Christian faith and apply it to contemporary issues and to our Christian practice:

Scripture

We seek to discover the word of God through reading the Bible. There are different understandings among Methodists about the Bible's authority in our lives. We need to use resources like different Bible translations, commentaries and Bible reading notes.

Tradition

This is the wisdom and creativity of Christians over time and across the world. It includes inspirational material like hymns, songs, prayers, poetry, Christian art and devotional books. There are also formally agreed teachings like the creeds, the content of the catechism, and statements and reports from the Methodist Conference.

Reason

We are called to love God with our minds as well as with our hearts. To the best of our ability we need to think things through in the light of reason. This means becoming aware of different points of view, and using our own critical thinking to make sense of God's world.

Experience

Methodism particularly stresses the importance of our own experience of God's grace working in our lives. We gain wisdom and maturity from life experience, especially when we pray and reflect about our story with other Christians.

C. Equality law

As we discovered at the start of this session, our understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion is driven by our understanding of the Gospel, and the nature of Christian conduct. However, it is important that we have a broad understanding of the legal framework for equality in the UK. The key points of the Equality Act 2010, which covers all of the United Kingdom, are set out in the EXTEND section. There is also a supplementary module to this toolkit that deals specifically with the Law (Module 1.3 - The Law).

NB: There are additional provisions in Scotland, and the Island Administrations have some variations.

The Equality Act identifies nine 'protected characteristics'. These are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation.

Consider:

- Who is protected against discrimination by equality legislation?
- What experience do you have of living with contradictory convictions?
- How does our Methodist quadrilateral help us to think about equality, diversity and inclusion?

5 Exploring language and communication

The success of humankind is due to our advanced ability to communicate. Language is a powerful tool and how we use and receive language underpins much of our ability to build community. As Christians, we aim to be respectful and mindful towards others in our behaviour and language. Inclusive language is about using language that aims to be respectful, clear, accurate and unambiguous, and which does not leave people wondering whether what has been said has excluded them.

For example, if we say ‘all men’, do we mean ‘all male adults’, ‘all males’ (men and boys), or ‘all people’? Choosing accurate and meaningful words is a more effective way of communicating and is more likely to be inclusive. In some of the later modules we will explore more about language in greater depth. Language changes over time. Terms that were once commonplace may now be unacceptable ways of describing people.

The platinum rule – being empathetic in our use of language

In the same way that Jesus asked people he met what it was they wanted from him, we do best at inclusive language when we engage each other in a conversation about what terms or language are most acceptable. And we remember that not every member of a group will want to be described in the same way. It is important, therefore, to listen to how people identify themselves, and to be aware of how language evolves.

Group activity (see Activity 3)

Working in small teams complete Activity 3 (in the Appendix) and define the words on it. Note: no one is expected to be an authority on these words.

Each team may nominate a spokesperson for feedback on three words which were new to them or which caused most discussion.

Consider:

- What words caused the most discussion?
- Have any words changed meaning?
- Are the meanings of all the words clear?
- How does our understanding of words reflect our own culture and experience?
- How powerful are the words we choose to use?

A glossary is provided in the Appendix too.

Each team to provide feedback to the wider group

Think about everyday terms where people have strong opinions. This could include things that depend on culture, class, region, age and so on.

Do people say:

- Sofa or settee?
- Church or chapel?
- Front room, living room, sitting room, parlour?
- Bap, roll, bun, breadcake?
- Radio, wireless, DAB?

And if so, why is it important to use the right word in the right circumstances?

Also, if we use words that have more than one meaning, do people know which meaning we intend to use? eg 'Something for all men' – does that mean just men (ie adult males)? What about women or boys or girls? Are they included? If we use the word 'men' when we mean 'people', how can we be clear when we use 'men' to mean men, and not others? How can we be clear in what we mean by what we say?

This is explored further in Module 5: Gender, which includes a conference report on inclusive language.

Learning points

This section should have helped you to understand that:

- Language is constantly evolving and changing. It is important for us to listen to how different groups of people use language to describe themselves, in order to understand how to be inclusive in our use of language.
- Listening is an extremely important part of language.
- Inclusive language allows us to be clear and meaningful while avoiding being misunderstood.

Remember and consider

- **Language has power**
Does your language include or exclude people?
- **Language is ambiguous**
Could the words you use be misinterpreted?
- **Language changes over time**
Are the terms you use still appropriate today?

6 Summary

By the end of this session you should have discovered that equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI):

- is compatible with our understanding of Christian conduct, not a legal imposition.
- should be considered in the light of the gospel and with regard to Methodist theological reflection (the quadrilateral).
- is dynamic and not straightforward. It requires openness of heart and mind. Sometimes values and ideas conflict and we have to work through those contradictions with grace and respect.
- is not political correctness, but we do need to understand how our language impacts on others.
- requires us to be aware of our own culture and assumptions, the cultures of others, and to challenge stereotypical ways of thinking.

Summary questions

- How does it feel to be discriminated against or not included?
- Who is responsible for achieving equality, diversity and inclusion in your local church?
- What could be the consequences of failing to deal with discrimination and exclusion?
- Why is equality, diversity and inclusion important in your church/context?
- What will you do about it?

EXTEND

For further study or personal reflection. Keep for use with other modules.

Contents

1. How discrimination happens
2. SCIP classification
3. Cultural awareness

1 How discrimination happens

Discrimination happens for a number of reasons. Most people would not want to be thought of as being discriminatory, but it needs to be acknowledged that some people do choose deliberately to discriminate against others. This is not an attitude that we, as Christians, should find acceptable, and we need to find the courage and grace to challenge such behaviour.

However, discrimination is often the unintended by-product of day-to-day decisions. It also happens because people are unaware that other people have different preferences, lifestyles and needs. It can also happen because people have a stereotypical view of others, or because they have outdated information about others. People can adopt the general assumptions that a society has developed over a long period of time. Most societies/nations/communities have an unconscious bias towards the views of the majority in that society, and in particular from the perspective of those who hold the most power and influence within society. This means that those views become seen as 'the norm' and anything else is unusual, or unnoticed, or noticed for the wrong reasons.

Look at the three case studies below, and identify which is an example of unintended discrimination, which is about stereotyping and which is about unconscious bias.

Case study A

Judy works in social care and is also a pastoral visitor at her local church. She is a very committed and caring person and feels she is treating people equally. Judy says "I treat everybody just the same." The unintended consequence of that is that she hasn't taken account of the fact that people are different and need to be treated differently in order to be treated equally. Judy has found it difficult to communicate with one member of the church, Pat, on her regular visits. She always gives him an hour of her time and has a consistent routine. But Pat has a form of autism and communicates through specific activities. Pat finds it difficult to spend a whole hour in someone's company and would rather play the piano or a game of chess for half an hour. Judy's good intention to spend an hour with everyone and cheer them up, doesn't work for Pat and just adds to his isolation.

Case study B

Jack is a former teacher who now leads his church's band. Jack was always a good teacher who commanded respect. However he is very confused by the behaviour of Tom, who plays in the band. Tom is a good player, but during rehearsals doesn't seem to pay attention, always looking at the floor when Jack speaks to him. Jack finds this hard to cope with. Unconsciously, Jack gives other members of the band more attention. As a result Tom becomes discouraged and gives up playing. It is only later that Jack learns from Tom's mum that, in the country Tom grew up in, it is a sign of respect not to look your elders in the eye.

Case study C

A local church is looking for a new property steward, after the current property steward, John, has moved away. Janet, who ran the toddler group, offered to take on the role, and the stewards thought she might be suitable if they couldn't find anyone else. The stewards approached several of the men in church, all of whom have said that either they are too busy with other duties or wouldn't know where to begin. It hadn't occurred to the stewards that Janet might have been the most suitable person. Janet, a structural engineer, is so fed up with the situation that she moves to another church in the circuit.

Now, using the SCIP classification (see next section), identify whether the case studies are highlighting structural, cultural, institutional or personal issues.

Think about how often on the news we hear that so-and-so is the first woman, first disabled person, or first Black person to do something.

There's nothing wrong with being White, middle class or middle aged, or male. But equally, there is nothing wrong in being someone else. However, it isn't usually noticed if three White male judges sit in the Court of Appeal – nor should it be. But if there were three Black or Asian judges or three female judges, it would undoubtedly be commented on. And, quite probably, they would be put under greater scrutiny. The stereotypical views that people have about others, whether conscious of them or not, start to surface and people question the ability of those who don't fit the usual profile. In this case, the usual profile of a judge would be a middle-aged or older, White middle-class male.

Women, lesbian and gay people, people with a disability or impairment, Black, Asian and minority ethnic people are still considered to be out of place in many positions within society. These assumed norms are often accepted by most people, even if they are not aware that that is what they are doing. This 'unconscious bias' is the result of people seeing themselves and those like them as 'the norm' and seeing people in other groups as 'other'. This can lead, for example, to minority groups being judged more harshly than others. It can lead us to jump to the wrong conclusions about them, or to deny them access, opportunity or justice on account of our prejudiced beliefs.

Case study D

Sally arrives at the hospital for an interview as a clinical governance manager. On arrival, the receptionist, noticing Sally uses a wheelchair, escorts her safely to the waiting room. About 20 minutes later, Sally asks how long she will have to wait, and is told that the consultant is running behind with his patients that day. The receptionist had assumed that Sally was a patient and had sent her to the wrong waiting room. Sally had missed her interview. The unconscious bias of the receptionist means that Sally has not been seen as a person of equal worth to the other candidates for the job.

Consider:

What would happen if everyone saw themselves, not as the norm, but as part of a diverse range of 'otherness'?

2 SCIP classification

By Professor Gus John, educationalist, campaigner and learning facilitator

Discrimination occurs in four dimensions:

Structural

Structural aspects are located in the physical, legal and political structures of society and the Church, including: our law and polity*, committees, mission resource and property, employment, etc. For example, if we limit our welcome and inclusion to only those who can physically access our churches, this sends the signal that we do not take seriously the rights to access of those who require physical adjustments in order to join with us in fellowship and ministry. Similarly, if the police and the courts treat women who report sexual assault or rape in a manner that suggests ‘they asked for it’ and make them feel that they are on trial, this sends a signal to offenders that the law does not take the sexual oppression of women seriously and that they could expect to get away with their abuse of women.

* By polity in this context we mean how things are governed and organised.

Cultural

Society’s and the Church’s shared meanings, assumptions and ‘norms’ continue to promote implicit and explicit values that bind institutions and individuals. In an oppressive culture, the cultural perspectives of the dominant group are imposed on both the Church and individuals.

Cultural aspects such as shared meanings, assumptions and norms can be seen to operate in:

- Humour: stereotypical jokes and mimicking of difference, ie language and dialect.
- Stereotypes and myths: ie ‘happy-go-lucky’ Black people, the deserving and undeserving poor, etc.
- Science: ie the assumed correlation between class and intelligence, or race and intelligence.

Institutional

Institutional aspects are embedded in the ‘normal’ practices of the Church, the ‘we have always done it this way – what isn’t broken doesn’t need fixing’ approach. Some members of churches insist upon ‘business as usual’ even though some of these practices might exclude people. An example of this would be having a metal offering plate, which ensures everyone knows what everyone else is contributing. This has led to those in financial hardship not wanting to attend Church as it ‘shames them’.

Personal

Personal aspects such as individual attitudes, beliefs and behaviour can be seen to operate at a number of levels, not necessarily overt:

- Violence: verbal, physical and psychological/emotional, giving the ‘cold shoulder’ to individuals and ignoring and avoiding them in a conspicuous manner.
- Ridicule: through ‘humour’ or caricature of, for example, dialects. Another example would be deliberately mispronouncing ‘ethnic minority names’ or substituting English names and insisting on using them without consent.
- Harassment: linked to stereotypes.

It is important to note how these various elements of discrimination: structural, institutional, cultural and personal, interact and reinforce one another. This often happens in ways which seem so ‘normal’ that we do not even see them as part of the dynamics of quite unjustifiable treatment.

3 Cultural awareness

There are wide variations within and between cultures in most countries, and especially across Great Britain. Cultural differences occur on the basis of:

- ethnicity (race)
- class (wealth, educational opportunity and social status)
- religion and belief (and the practices that flow from that such as tradition, customs and rituals, understanding of the law, language, leisure)
- sexual orientation
- gender and gender identity
- differing abilities and impairments
- differing life experiences.

In the context of equality, diversity and inclusion, developing a sense of cultural awareness helps us to acknowledge that there is not one homogenous culture that defines or describes any single group or community.

Importantly, 'culture' is not static. For example, 'British culture' would have undergone massive change even if other ethnic groups had not come to the UK in significant numbers after the Second World War. In other words, Britain was 'multicultural' long before people of African and Asian heritage helped to change the social landscape.

Whilst some people may identify with a particular archetypal culture (ie a broad cultural identity to which most people in that group have some connection), it is important to recognise that individuals vary in their attitudes to 'cultural norms' and must not be stereotyped. Cultural awareness is an acknowledgement that not all people identify as belonging to an ethnic group, Black or White, share a common culture or adopt common cultural habits. The same principles apply to age, class, disability, sexual orientation and gender. It means respecting and seeking to understand 'difference' and questioning some of the stereotypes that are held about people of different cultures.

In order to understand other people's culture we also need to understand our own culture and how that affects others. People can only develop cultural awareness by developing relationships with people through an open and receptive mindset.

Cultural differences can be subtle, such as varied ways of using body language to show respect. Some cultures do this through eye contact, others through avoidance of eye contact. Acceptable standards of dress may vary by culture too, and colloquial phrases don't always translate easily from one culture to another.

Developing our cultural awareness helps us to move away from understanding behaviours that are different to our own as not being the norm, and it helps us to develop empathy and understanding.

Consider:

- In what ways have your cultural values changed from childhood to adulthood?
- What have you learnt about other people's culture and life experience? And why was that important?
- What could you do to understand others' perspectives better? And who can help you do that?

Closing worship

Philippians 4:1-9

Prayer

Grant to us in our prayers, O God, the gift of insight
that we may harvest passing thoughts
and set free imprisoned ideas,
for the good of your Kingdom.
Amen.

(John Taylor)

Summoned by the God who made us rich in our diversity
Singing the Faith 689

APPENDICES

1. Activities

- Activity 1: Same – fair – different – equal?
- Activity 2: Quiz
- Activity 3: Exploring language and terminology
- Answers to Activity 2

2. Glossary

3. Preparation tasks for other modules

4. Acknowledgments

Activity 1: Same – fair – different – equal?

Working in pairs or small teams, consider the questions below. Someone from your team will need to provide feedback to the whole group. Remember confidentiality is important. You need to agree in your pairs or teams what is to be fed back.

1. Think of the four words: SAME, FAIR, DIFFERENT and EQUAL. Imagine you have been asked to rewrite the dictionary and lose some words. If you had to choose just two of these words, which would you choose to keep in the dictionary and why?

Not everyone in the group has to agree on an answer.

2. Look at the following diagram. Can you think of any circumstances that would fit under the headings?



3. Have you ever been in a situation where you felt you didn't belong? What was it about that situation that made you feel like that?

Feedback to the whole group

1. Could you agree which words to keep? Why were the words you chose important?
2. Give a brief summary of what your team suggested for the second question.
3. In the third question, did anyone suggest what could have been done to make them feel that they did belong? If so, what was it?

Activity 2: Quiz

	Question	Answer
1	In what year did the Methodist Church first ordain women?	
2	True or false? A circuit can choose only to have male ministers.	
3	True or false? The Methodist Church recognises, celebrates and affirms lesbian and gay people in the life and ministry of the Church.	
4	True or false? Methodist ministers may, as a point of conscience, refuse to marry divorcees.	
5	True or false? Methodist ministers may choose only to recognise adult baptism, and refuse to baptize infants.	
6	True or false? Methodism is committed to social justice.	
7	True or false? Methodism is committed to pacifism.	
8	True or false? Prayers may not be said on Methodist premises for civil partnerships or same-sex marriages.	
9	How often does the Methodist Church require church councils to conduct disability access audits of their premises?	
10	Besides Scripture, what else does Methodism use to guide our Christian faith and practice? A Tradition and experience B Experience and reason C Tradition and reason D Tradition, experience and reason E Nothing (Scripture alone)	

Activity 3: Exploring language and terminology

Terms	A definition	Appropriate - A Inappropriate - I
Bisexual		
Black		
Black and minority ethnic		
Blind		
Chronic illness		
Civil partnership		
Coloured		
Coming out		
Crippled		
Culture		
Disabled person/people		
Ethnic group		
Gay		
Gay man		
Gender identity		
Gender reassignment		
Handicapped		
Homophobia		
Homosexual		
Immigrant		
Institutional racism		
Invalid		
Lesbian		
LGB		
LGBT		
Mainstreaming		
Mixed race		
Negro, caucasian, negroid, oriental		
Non-White		
Outing		
Positive action		
Positive discrimination		
Privilege (eg White privilege, male privilege)		
Race		
Racism		
Sexual orientation		
Trans		
Transgender		
Transsexual		

Answers to Activity 2

	Question	Answer	Notes
1	In what year did the Methodist Church first ordain women?	1974	Some participants may be aware that in the nineteenth century some Methodist denominations had ordained itinerant preachers, including women. The status of their ordination is a moot point in Methodist history, so the formal date of recognition of women's ordination in Methodism is 1974.
2	True or false? A circuit can chose only to have male ministers.	False	Women have, and must be treated with equal rights and privilege to men in both ordained and lay office. Also, we are a connexional church where ministers are stationed to a circuit. In that sense, a local church doesn't choose its minister.
3	True or false? The Methodist Church recognises, celebrates and affirms lesbian and gay people in the life and ministry of the Church.	True	Part of the 1993 resolutions on human sexuality. Whilst there are varied views on matters such as same sex marriage and civil partnership, all Methodist churches are expected to be welcoming to lesbian and gay people.
4	True or false? Methodist ministers may, as a point of conscience, refuse to marry divorcees.	True	No minister, or other authorised person, is required to marry anyone. Whilst the Church permits the marriage of divorcees, it remains an area where we live with contradictory convictions.
5	True or false? Methodist ministers may choose only to recognise adult baptism, and refuse to baptize infants.	False	This is not an area where we live with contradictory convictions. According to Methodist usage the "sacrament of baptism is administered to infants..." (From Clause 6 of the Deed of Union.)
6	True or false? Methodism is committed to social justice.	True	From our foundation, Methodism has been committed to social holiness, which includes social justice.
7	True or false? Methodism is committed to pacifism.	False	Whilst many Methodists are pacifists and there is general support for peaceful aims, this is another area where we live with contradictory convictions.
8	True or false? Prayers may not be said on Methodist premises for civil partnerships or same sex marriages.	False	This was clarified at the Conference in 2014. Whilst the resolutions on civil partnerships in 2006 stated that Methodist premises should not be used for the purposes of blessing same sex relationships, the 2014 resolutions affirmed that there should be an appropriate pastoral response. Therefore, although there may be no formal services of blessing, for same sex marriage or civil partnership, prayers and thanksgiving may be given.
9	How often does the Methodist Church require church councils to conduct disability access audits of their premises?	Annually	It is part of the annual property inspection.

	Question	Answer	Notes
10	<p>Besides Scripture, what else does Methodism use to guide our Christian faith and practice?</p> <p>A Tradition and experience B Experience and reason C Tradition and reason D Tradition, experience and reason E Nothing (Scripture alone)</p>	D	Methodists acknowledge the divine revelation as recorded in Scripture as the supreme rule of faith and practice, and draw also on the resources of tradition, experience and reason.

Glossary

Antisemitism – any belief, policy or action that discriminates against or incites hatred towards Jewish people, either by race or religion, or caricatures Jewish people and culture. This can include denying the right of Israel to exist, or to judge it by standards not applied to other nations.

Asian – a term that has been used to describe people of various origins from Asia, most commonly but not exclusively South Asia.

Bisexual – a term used to describe a person with a sexual orientation towards both men and women.

Black – a term that has been and still is used to describe some or all of the people of African, Caribbean, South Asian and other Asian origin, and often also to describe people of mixed heritage.

Black and minority ethnic (BME) – an acceptable term to describe people from minority ethnic groups who may be – but are not necessarily – Black, Asian or visibly different from the majority population. It also emphasises that everyone has ethnicity, even the majority group. The term encompasses people from a wide range of communities with huge cultural, social linguistic, religious and political differences. It refers to a shared political experience rather than skin tone, emphasising shared experience and resistance to colour-centred racism. In Britain there has been a huge debate around the term South Asians. It is argued that though politically it shows solidarity, it also denies South Asian cultural identity. An alternative that is sometimes used is BAME (Black, Asian and minority ethnic).

Blind – the term has a number of usages, to describe someone with a visual impairment or used as an abusive term for sighted people.

Bullying – a persistent, deliberate attempt to hurt or humiliate someone.

Civil partnership – a term that describes legal recognition of a same-sex relationship. It is not marriage in the religious sense of the word, but it awards lesbian and gay couples the same legal rights and responsibilities as heterosexual married couples.

Coloured – an offensive/unacceptable term. It was a colonial term used to emphasise difference and unequal status. The term is often still used by older people who mistakenly believe it is less harsh than the term Black. It also has links with the apartheid system in South Africa, in relation to people of mixed heritage. The term should not be confused with the term ‘people of colour’ which is a preferred term amongst African Americans and other Black, Asian and mixed heritage people, predominantly in the USA. Some, but not all, people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities in the UK also find the term ‘people of colour’ to be acceptable.

Coming out – a term used predominately in the lesbian and gay community to positively reveal and communicate sexuality. The term acknowledges that the exploration of one’s sexuality can be a life-long process.

Crippled – now an offensive/unacceptable term which is considered a term of abuse. Historically it was used to describe physical disability, but is now best avoided.

Culture – a term used to denote shared experiences, or common characteristics in a group such as language, religious conventions, political systems, economic systems, kinship systems, incest prohibitions, family structures, etc. It is problematic as it is sometimes used as a ‘statement of fact’, which is fixed. However, ‘culture’ is only a system of classification, it is not fixed or timeless. It focuses on so-called similarities, disregarding differences within a particular group.

Disabled person/people – there is much debate about which terms are most acceptable to people. Some people prefer to be described as a ‘person with disabilities’, because it places the person ahead of disability. Some prefer to describe themselves as a disabled person, emphasising that it is not their impairment that disables them, but inaccessible environments and other people’s attitudes. Currently, the balance of preference is towards person with disability/people with disabilities, but this may change from time to time. It is always best to listen to how people describe themselves and use their preferred terminology wherever possible.

Ethnic group – a term used to describe people who share at least some cultural features such as history, language, beliefs, religion, nationality and geographical region. Everybody belongs to an ethnic group, including White people. In the UK Gypsies have been recognised as an ethnic group in law.

Gay – an umbrella term for lesbian, gay and bisexual people (LGB). It is best to avoid using this word to cover all LGB people as it can render lesbians and bisexual people invisible.

Gay man – a term used to refer to a man with a sexual orientation towards other men.

Gender identity – a term to describe a person’s self-identification of being male or female (see also **transgender**, below).

Gender reassignment – this is the process of transitioning from one sex to another (see also **transgender**, below).

Handicapped – an offensive/unacceptable term that implies mental defectiveness, permanent incapacity, dependency and barriers to progress. This cap-in-hand image is seen as implying that disabled people need to find charity for their wellbeing.

Homophobia – literally an irrational fear of gay and lesbian people, but with a wider meaning of any belief, policy or action that discriminates against them, incites hatred towards them or caricatures them. The Church says that homophobia is any statement, policy or action which denies the image of God in another person due to their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Homosexual – a disliked term, originally used in a medical context to describe sexual orientation towards people of the same sex. In preference, use terms such as lesbian, gay man/woman, bisexual, bisexual man/woman or the acronym LGB (lesbian, gay and bisexual).

Immigrant – an acceptable or offensive/unacceptable term depending on whether it is used in the correct context to refer to people who have just moved to a new country from elsewhere. People from many different minority ethnic groups have been settled in the UK for long periods and most were born here. It is incorrect to refer to these people as immigrants.

Impairment – something that limits or restricts a person’s mental or physical function. This can vary from minor injuries which have no significant effect on a person’s ability to do everyday tasks, through to those that could be considered disabling. The extent to which those with impairments consider themselves to be disabled/people with disabilities varies greatly.

Institutional racism – a term best defined by the description in the Macpherson Report into the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry:

“Institutional racism is the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people. It persists because of the failure of the organisation openly and adequately to recognise and

address its existence and causes by policy, example and leadership.”

Invalid – an unacceptable and outdated term, originally used to describe a person with disabilities or impairments. The term has been perceived as demeaning, suggesting a person is ‘in-valid’. Person with a disability or disabled person are more acceptable terms.

Islamophobia – literally an irrational fear of Islam or Muslims, but with a wider meaning of any belief, policy or action that discriminates against or incites hatred towards Muslims or which caricatures Muslim people and culture.

Lesbian – an acceptable term to describe a woman who is sexually attracted to other women.

LGB – an acceptable acronym for lesbian, gay and bisexual people.

LGBT – a commonly used collective acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

Mixed race – currently the term is preferred by most people of mixed parentage, whilst others prefer to be identified by their parents’ nationality, eg Anglo-Nigerian. Some people object to these terms, preferring mixed heritage. It is useful to listen to how people describe themselves and then use that terminology with them.

Negro, caucasian, negroid, oriental – these are words which are becoming redundant in our language. They are terms relating to discredited theories of racial origin.

Non-White – presumes that White is the norm with any deviation being considered not ‘normal’. Use Black/Asian instead.

Outing – a term that describes the act of publicly declaring another person’s sexuality without their permission. A lesbian, gay or bisexual person may out themselves.

Positive action – lawful actions that seek to overcome or minimise disadvantages that people who share a protected characteristic have experienced, or to meet their different needs. An example of this would be providing mentoring to encourage staff from under-represented groups to apply for promotion.

Positive discrimination – it is unlawful to discriminate in favour of someone solely on the grounds of their age, race, ethnicity, religion or belief, gender or disability. Exceptions to this rule come under the Equality Act as Occupational Requirements, eg a women’s support worker in a halfway house for abused women. There is also an exception in that it is possible to discriminate in favour of a disabled person/person with disabilities in two circumstances: as an employer, where two candidates are *equally* appointable; and in providing services such as theatre seats, or transport where it may be necessary to treat a disabled person/person with disabilities more favourably if it is the *only* possible way for them to access that service.

Privilege – this is the other side of the coin to discrimination or disadvantage. It is where a person has advantages that others do not. For example, the conventions and habits of a society often reflect the preferences of a majority population, whilst disadvantaging minorities. Gender privilege is usually – but not always – about the advantages that men have over women.

Race – a term historically used as a way of categorising individuals and population groups. It is not based on any biologically valid distinctions between the genetic make-up of differently identified races.

Racism – racism is any behaviour or pattern of behaviour that tends to systematically deny access to opportunities or privileges to members of one racial group while offering access to opportunities and privileges to members of another racial group. This definition recognises that racism consists of five key features: a variety of behaviours, systematic behaviour, preferential treatment, inequitable outcomes and non-random victimisation.

Sexual orientation – a term that describes the sexual attraction between individuals and can be to the opposite gender (heterosexual), the same gender (gay/lesbian) or both genders (bisexual).

Trans – the terms ‘trans people’ and ‘transgender people’ are both often used as umbrella terms for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from their birth sex. This includes:

- transsexual people (those who propose to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process of gender reassignment to live permanently in their acquired gender)
- transvestite/cross-dressing people (those who wear clothing traditionally associated with the other gender, either occasionally or more regularly)
- androgyne/polygender people (those who have non-binary gender identities and do not identify as male or female).

Transgender – an umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from their birth sex. They may or may not seek to undergo gender reassignment hormonal treatment/surgery. Often used interchangeably with trans.

Transsexual – a person who intends to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment, which may or may not involve hormone therapy or surgery. Transsexual people feel a deep conviction to present themselves in the appearance of their true sex. They may change their name and identity to live as their preferred gender. Some take hormones and have cosmetic treatments to alter their appearance and physical characteristics. Some undergo surgery to change their bodies to approximate more closely to their preferred gender. Transsexual people have the protected characteristic of gender reassignment under the Equality Act 2010. Under the Act, gender reassignment is a personal process rather than a medical one and it does not require someone to undergo medical treatment in order to be protected.

Preparation tasks for other modules

Module 2

Age

Consider your own life history. Reflect on how you have been treated by others because of your age at the various stages of your life. Consider what assumptions other people might have made about you because of your age and how that affected you. Look back at times of your life where you may have felt left out because of your age.

Module 3

Class and Economic Justice

Take an opportunity to try to locate and read some of the reports from the Joint Public Issues Team (JPIT) of the Methodist Church, Baptists Together, the United Reformed Church and the Church of Scotland.

<http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/>

Module 4

Disability and Impairment

Take some time to research different definitions of disability and impairment. Consider what you understand 'disability' to be.

Module 5

Gender

Try to find out about the gender balance of various organisations. This might include finding out the numbers of male and female MPs or local councillors. How many superintendent ministers in your district are women? How many are men? Consider whether or not they are representative of the population as a whole, which is approximately 51% female and 49% male.

Module 6

Race

Try to find out about the racial/ethnic mix of your local community. Consider how well (or not) your church is representative of your local community. And/or, try to find out about the ethnic balance of various organisations. This might include finding out how the ratio of male-to-female MPs compares to the profile of the United Kingdom population.

Module 7

Sexual Orientation

Before starting on this module take the opportunity to re-read 'Living with contradictory convictions' (in Module 1), and consider in what ways you have learnt to live with differences of convictions and opinions amongst friends, family, church or work colleagues.

Acknowledgements

This toolkit is the product of the efforts of many people who have offered their knowledge, expertise and experience. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee is grateful to the efforts of those who served on the EDI Stakeholder Forums who advised on the individual modules.

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