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What is EDI?

EDI is not just a set of values—it's a **core part of ethical, legal, and effective practice**.

► **Equality** ensures all adults, regardless of identity or background, have fair access to protection, support, and justice by addressing barriers linked to discrimination.

► **Diversity** recognises the varied cultural, ethnic, religious, gender, and socio-economic backgrounds of adults at risk, helping practitioners avoid assumptions and tailor person-centred responses.

► **Inclusion** creates safeguarding environments where individuals feel respected, heard, and involved, with services that are accessible and responsive to diverse needs.

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Why is EDI Important in Safeguarding?

Adults at risk often face multiple layers of disadvantage, such as disability, poverty, language barriers, or discrimination. Embedding EDI helps practitioners understand lived experiences, build trust, and tailor culturally-competent, person-centred interventions.

Without an EDI lens, safeguarding responses may miss key risks, fail to engage individuals effectively, or reinforce systemic inequalities.

For example, neglect may be overlooked due to assumptions about cultural norms, or abuse in same-sex relationships dismissed due to limited understanding of LGBTQ+ dynamics. A lack of interpreter support can also prevent non-English speakers from reporting harm. EDI helps identify and address these barriers, ensuring inclusive and effective protection for all.

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Legal Framework

► **The Care Act 2014:** Requires local authorities to promote individual wellbeing, including protection from abuse and neglect, and to consider the diverse needs of individuals.

► **Equality Act 2010:** Protects individuals from discrimination and mandates public bodies to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

► **Human Rights Act 1998:** Upholds rights to dignity, respect, and freedom from degrading treatment—core to safeguarding practice.

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Useful Resources

[Equality Act 2010 Guide](#)
[Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#) | Partners in Salford

[The Care Act 2014](#)

[The Human Rights Act 1988](#)

[What social workers should consider when working with LGBTQ+ people - Community Care](#)

[SSAB 7 Minute Briefings](#) – find briefings on relevant topics such as d/Deaf awareness and Unconscious Bias.

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EDI in Safeguarding Practice

Cultural Sensitivity: Understand backgrounds to avoid misjudging beliefs or roles.

Accessible Communication: Use interpreters or formats suited to individual needs.

Challenging Bias: Reflect on assumptions that may affect decisions.

Person-Centred: Focus on identity, experience, and what matters to the person.

Joined-Up Working: Share EDI info across agencies for coordination.

Reflective Practice: Use supervision to explore identity, power, and bias.

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Top Tips for Practice

Ask, don't assume: Explore how identity and background shape the person's experience.

Use interpreters and advocates: Especially where there are language or capacity issues.

Be curious and compassionate: Understand the whole person, not just the presenting issue.

Challenge discrimination: Speak up when you see exclusion or bias in practice.

Reflect regularly: Use team discussions and supervision to explore EDI in your practice.



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The importance of Intersectionality

Intersectionality recognises that people's experiences are shaped by the overlap of multiple identities such as race, gender, disability, age, and sexuality. This lens helps practitioners understand how these factors combine to create unique vulnerabilities and barriers. It moves practice beyond one-size-fits-all approaches, ensuring responses are tailored to the whole person.

Practitioners can apply intersectionality by assessing the whole person, challenging assumptions, tailoring support, sharing relevant information, and reflecting on how identity and bias shape decisions.