

Preventing race discrimination

All employers should take steps to try to make sure race discrimination does not happen at work.

As an employer, you should:

- aim for a culture where everyone accepts that race discrimination is not acceptable
- recognise and promote the benefits of a diverse and inclusive organisation that does not exclude anyone because of race

[Find out more about improving equality, diversity and inclusion](#)

Steps for preventing race discrimination

Many ways to prevent discrimination apply equally to all 'protected characteristics'. You can find out more in our advice on [preventing discrimination](#).

Measures that are specific to preventing race discrimination include:

- talking about race
- creating a race equality action plan
- appointing a race champion
- having race allies
- setting up a staff race network
- ethnicity pay gap reporting

If you're a small organisation with limited resources, there's still a lot you can do to prevent discrimination. Making your organisation more inclusive does not have to be costly or complicated.

Talking about race

It's important to talk to your staff about appropriate language to use when discussing race. This includes when you're speaking with individual staff members and in wider work communications.

You should make it clear that racist language is not acceptable, including things some might consider as 'banter' or jokes.

You should also be sensitive in the terms you use around race and ethnicity. Common terms include:

- BAME (black, Asian and minority ethnic)
- BME (black and minority ethnic)
- ethnic minorities
- minority ethnic
- people of colour

Each of these terms can be problematic and there's no one term that everyone will prefer. Talk to your staff about how they feel about these terms. Language and preferences can also change over time.

People can sometimes cause offence by using the 'wrong' language. If they have not done it maliciously, talking to them about what's appropriate can sometimes be all that's needed. It's important not to excuse deliberately offensive behaviour in this way.

Where there's a genuine need to refer to race, use a specific ethnic identity where it's relevant. For example, if you're discussing issues that specifically affect black employees make sure that's clear – broader terms like 'BAME' or 'ethnic minorities' would not be appropriate.

[Read the CIPD's guide on how to talk about race at work](#)

Creating a race equality action plan

You may want to create a race equality action plan. This is sometimes called an anti-racism strategy.

If you have good diversity policies and practices, you might not need a dedicated race plan. But it may help if there are particular issues in your organisation that could lead to race discrimination.

A plan should cover:

- all areas of your organisation's work
- what your organisation is doing to prevent racism
- any aspects of your work culture or processes that are particularly problematic, and how you plan to address them
- any issues that arise because of wider events, for example the covid-19 (coronavirus) pandemic
- strong messages that racism, discrimination and harassment are not acceptable
- how you'll use equality monitoring and data
- managing languages at work, if that's relevant for your organisation – for example if a group of employees share a common language other than English, or if there's a Welsh language requirement

You should create the plan in consultation with trade unions or other employee representatives.

[Read the CIPD's guide on developing an anti-racism strategy](#)

Appointing a race champion

A race champion can be someone of any race who's committed to promoting equality and tackling race discrimination.

They should be:

- willing and able to give time to the role
- senior enough to be able to influence decision-makers and make sure actions are taken

The role could include things like:

- chairing a staff race network
- following developments in law and good practice
- writing a blog or newsletter to promote racial equality and diversity
- challenging other senior leaders to consider issues around race
- raising issues that need addressing at a high level

Setting up a staff race network

A staff race network is a formal group for ethnic minority staff and their allies to:

- share experiences
- discuss cultural differences
- support each other
- raise issues that need addressing

Having race allies

Race allies are people from majority groups who want to help make sure their organisation is inclusive. They can be from any part of an organisation, working at any level.

Race allies should:

- help raise the profile of issues around race and how to address and prevent them
- actively listen and try to understand people's experiences
- learn about racism and use what they learn to influence others

Supporting your staff network and race roles

If you set up a staff race network or any race roles, make sure you support them. This includes:

- giving people the time to be involved
- actively listening to concerns raised
- taking steps to resolve issues

Ethnicity pay gap reporting

The 'ethnicity pay gap' is the difference in average earnings between all ethnic groups. While it's not a legal requirement, many organisations already report on their ethnicity pay gap. It can help to build transparency and trust.

[Follow the ethnicity pay gap reporting guidance on GOV.UK](#)

Get more advice and support

If you need help to deal with any challenges in your organisation, you can:

- [contact the Acas helpline](#)
- [get tailored support for your organisation](#)