INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE GUIDELINES

Use People-First Language

Think Impact, Not Intent

Use Gender Neutral Words

If You're Unsure Ask

Avoid Derogatory or Discriminatory Language

Our Values

Excellence, Inclusion, Impact & Respect

T U DUBLIN

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Inclusive language

- Does not reflect discriminatory or stereotypical views
- Does not define people by certain characteristics
- Shows appreciation for the diversity everyone brings to the table
- Creates a culture where people can be their full authentic selves

Think Impact, not Intent

It is the impact of our language that is important, not our intent. Think of it this way; if you accidentally spilled coffee on someone, you would apologise even though you did not mean to do it. Language is no different, if you unintentionally say something offensive, focus on the impact of your language not you intention.

If you do say something offensive, often unintentionally, acknowledge your mistake, apologies and move on.

Principles

- People-First Language
  i. Use people-first language that centers on the individual rather than their descriptor, for example, using "people with disabilities," rather than "disabled people."
  ii. There are exceptions to this where "identity first" language is acceptable eg transgender person, deaf person.

- Gender Neutral
  i. Use neutral words related to gender, sexual orientation, and other distinguishing qualities. E.g. "parent" instead of "mother" or "father.", "person" or "individual" instead of "man" or "woman."

- Avoid Using Derogatory or Discriminatory Language
  i. Discriminatory or Offensive language includes words and phrases that:
    - Reinforce stereotypes
    - Reinforce derogatory labels
    - Exclude or marginalise certain groups of people
    - Patronise or trivialise certain groups of people
    - Reinforces unequal power dynamics
    - Cause discomfort or offence

- If you're Unsure, Ask
  ii. Listen to your Colleagues: ask your colleagues about the language they feel is most inclusive and find out what words or phrases they may find harmful.

Don't Stand By, Stand Up & Speak Out

1 We may not always get it right, but we should endeavour to be explicit in our intentions to try to be as inclusive as possible.

2 Repeated use of offensive language could constitute bullying or discrimination. Please see the TU Dublin Dignity and Respect at Work Policy for more information.

3 Bystander intervention training is available for staff, for more information see the schedule of courses advertised by People Development.

4 All members of the University have the right to study and work in an environment free from all forms of bullying and harassment including sexism, racism, sexual misconduct, homophobia and transphobia.

You can find further information on how to report harm or discrimination here.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE GUIDELINES

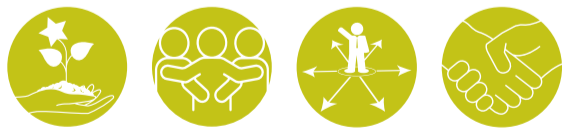**Use People-First Language**

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Race Ethnicity

- Use **accurate** and **respectful terminology** when referring to race and ethnicity, avoiding language that reinforces stereotypes and assumptions, and acknowledge the diversity of racial and ethnic identities
- Where possible be **specific about Ethnicity** e.g. "Black," "Asian," "Latino/Latina," or "Indigenous" otherwise best practice suggests the use of the term "Traveller, Black & Ethnic Minorities" as an inclusive way of describing people of different ethnicities

Age

- Inclusive language should be inclusive to our **multigenerational** colleagues
- **Avoid using language that stereotypes** or implies that a particular age group is more or less able or has stereotypical characteristics by virtue of chronological eg a 'young and vibrant team' or 'mature and experienced individual'
- If it is required to refer to age as the result of a policy for example, **specify the age** e.g. Persons aged 65 and over

Disability

- Use **positive language** rather than descriptions that emphasise limitations – e.g. accessible toilets
- Most times there is no need to refer to a person's disability, but when the need arises, choose **acceptable terminology** for the specific disability, or use the **term preferred by the individual**
- **Avoid blanket terms**. Always put the **person before the disability**: Person with a disability/people with disabilities, person who has . . . (schizophrenia, etc.), Person who is . . . (blind, etc.), Person with . . . (muscular dystrophy, etc.)

Sexism

- Consider how your language could reinforce gender stereotypes avoid **patronising** or **gender-specific terms** such as girls, pet, or ladies. Similarly, phrases like "man up," "grow a pair," or "don't be such a girl" should be avoided
- Avoid **irrelevant gender descriptions** or titles that imply the usual job-holder being of a particular gender
- Use **gender neutral language** eg instead of mankind, use humanity, instead of chairman, use chairperson

Gender Identity & Expression

- **Avoid** defaulting to **umbrella terms** like gay or homosexual. Use LGBTQ+ to refer to a broad community or **be specific** when relevant: lesbian, gay man, bisexual woman, etc.
- **Gender is a spectrum**: organising sex and gender in line with a male/female binary excludes people who are intersex or those whose gender identity and/ or gender expression does not fit within a binary framework
- Use **gender neutral pronouns** and **expressions**, for example, Welcome to friends and colleagues, Invite your spouse/partner, parents, caregivers, Respect the preferences of those people who want to be referred to by gender neutral pronouns. They, them, theirs (e.g. Sasha ate their food because they were hungry.) It is correct to use in the singular

For more information see: TU-Dublin-Gender-Identity-and-Gender-Expression-Guidelines.pdf (tudublin.ie)