# Instructions for running the Privilege Walk

The goal of the privilege walk is to acknowledge that not everyone is starting their academic career from the same place. The exercise should help the students to recognise and unpack different sorts of privilege within society. You might like to point out to the students that we sometimes don’t notice our own privilege because it is so ingrained within our culture. Following on from this exercise, students should take responsibility as a community for dismantling privilege when coming up with their rules to enhance the student learning community.

In the exercise, students line up on a starting line and take steps forward or backwards in response to a series of questions. Students will use assigned identities rather than their own identities. I have based these identities on what we know about our UG student makeup. (In 2018/2019, 70% of our undergraduate students identified as female. Over a quarter of our undergraduate students are international students with a further 14% coming to study in WLS from EU countries. 61% of our undergraduate students identify as BAME.) Students will have to have some artistic license with their assumed identity because not all relevant information will be on the card. At the end of the exercise, if you have time, encourage the students to think about any assumptions they may have made in relation to their assumed identity to introduce the idea of unconscious bias.

1. Assign each student an identity card.
2. You will need to create a space for the students to take steps forward. This will involve moving the furniture. The maximum steps a person can take is 20 steps forward. The minimum is 4 steps backward. Consider the best starting point for the students in the space you have available. You might also suggest that students take larger or smaller steps.
3. The exercise assumes that everyone is able to step forward and backward. While the disadvantage of having mobility issues is addressed in the assumed identities, if you have a student who really has a mobility issue they may not be able to take part in the exercise. If this is the case, you should acknowledge the issue with the group of students and perhaps take part in the exercise yourself on that student’s behalf if that is what they would like to do. The student can read out the questions instead.

# The 25 Questions

1. If you are physically able to take a step forward or backward, take two steps forward.
2. If you were ever uncomfortable about a joke related to your race, religion, ethnicity, gender, disability, or sexual orientation but felt unsafe to confront the situation, take one step back.
3. If you can walk down the street, holding the hand of the partner of your choice and not be afraid that you will encounter violence because of your genders, take a step forward.
4. If people in the UK rarely get your name wrong and find it easy to remember, take a step forward.
5. If you were told that you were beautiful, smart and capable by your parents, take one step forward.
6. If one or both of your parents were/are “white collar” professionals: doctors, lawyers, etc. take one step forward.
7. If you never have to think about which changing room or toilet to use, take a step forward.
8. If you don’t have to pay a surcharge to use the NHS, take one step forward.
9. If you saw members of your race, ethnic group, gender or sexual orientation portrayed on television in degrading roles, take one step back.
10. If you were ever offered a job or an opportunity because of your association with a friend or family member, take one step forward.
11. If you do not have to ask people to use your preferred pronouns ( e.g. she, he, they), take a step forward.
12. If your family ever had to move because they could not afford the rent, take one step back.
13. If you attended private school at any point in your life, take one step forward.
14. If English is your first language, take one step forward.
15. If one or both of your parents have a University degree, take one step forward.
16. If you have usually worked with people you felt were like yourself, take one step forward
17. If you are able to move through the world without fear of sexual assault, take one step forward.
18. If you would never think twice about calling the police when trouble occurs, take one step forward.
19. If you can go to a student event at any time without having to delegate caring responsibilities, take a step forward.
20. If you could buy a new suit for a formal event or job interview without worrying about how you would afford it, take a step forward.
21. If you feel comfortable walking home alone at night, take one step forward
22. If you can go anywhere in the country, and easily find the kinds of hair products you need, or cosmetics that match your skin colour, take one step forward
23. If you are never asked to speak on behalf of a group of people who share an identity with you, take one step forward.
24. If you or someone in your household suffered or suffers from mental illness, take one step back.
25. If you have an invisible illness or disability, take one step back.

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