

# Unconscious Bias

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# Outline of session

What is Unconscious Bias; considerations and top tips.

- Overview
- Examples
- What can you do



# What is Unconscious Bias?

**Unconscious bias** refers to a bias that we are *unaware of*, and which happens outside of our control. It is a bias that happens automatically and is triggered by our brain making quick judgments and assessments of people and situations, influenced by our **background, cultural environment and personal experiences**

(ECU: 2013 *Unconscious bias in higher education*)

# Examples

- Name
- Foreign v local qualifications
- Location / address
- Interview panel representation
- Selection of candidates / single gender
- Research project – advisory / steering group composition
- Teaching case studies
- Recruitment & Selection for student
- Recruitment & Selection for staff
- Staff Appraisal
- Student attainment
- Job adverts
- Marketing
- Website

# What you can do

- Be awareness/ conscious
- Considerations
- Small changes
- Pragmatic
- Challenging stereotypes and counter stereotypical information
- Using context to explain a situation
- Changing perception and relationship with out-group members
- Being an active bystander
- Improving processes

# Practical examples

- Reduce levels of bias – males & females on panel, cultural diversity on interview / selection panel, have criteria & use them
- Policies & procedures eg Physics example
- Diversity of guest speakers & lectures
- Timings / scheduling of meetings
- If an organisation's performance management systems were stereotype-free; if they reflected attributes, characteristics, and behaviours of all talent – women and men– then the workplace would truly be inclusive.

**What can you do / change / adapt /  
recommend**



# Summary

- We all have unconscious biases and we are all affected by bias
- We can take action to manage the impact on our behaviour and decision making
- It's up to individuals to decide what action to take

# Resources

ECU link <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/>

Unconscious bias in HE Literature review

<http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/unconscious-bias-in-higher-education/>