

What is F-TEC Open Minds?

Welcome to Open Minds. Open Minds is a bimonthly newsletter dedicated to the promotion and celebration of British values. Alongside this we will be keeping you up to date with any current and ongoing issues, we aim to keep you well informed whilst giving you an awareness of what is happening within the world. Our goal is to create an inclusive community where everyone feels valued and respected.

What are British Values?

Fundamental British Values underpin what it is to be a citizen in a modern and diverse Great Britain, valuing our community and celebrating the diversity of the UK. These values are:

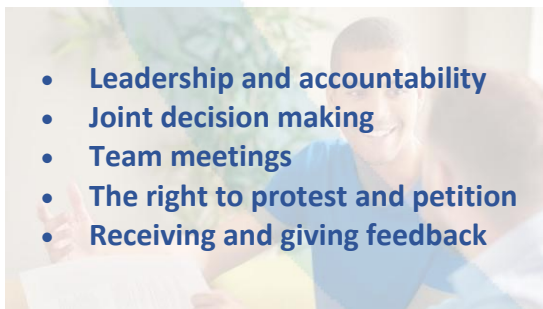
Democracy - A culture built upon freedom and equality, where everyone is aware of their rights and responsibilities.

Rule of Law - The need for rules to make a happy, safe and secure environment to live and work.

Respect and Tolerance - Understanding that we all don't share the same beliefs and values. Respecting the values, ideas and beliefs of others whilst not imposing our own on others. Below are some examples:

Individual Liberty - Protection of your rights and the rights of others you work with.

DEMOCRACY



- Leadership and accountability
- Joint decision making
- Team meetings
- The right to protest and petition
- Receiving and giving feedback

RULE OF LAW



- Legislation
- Agreed ways of working, policies and procedures
- How the law protects you and others
- Codes of conduct

RESPECT AND TOLERANCE



- Embracing diversity
- The importance of religion, traditions, cultural heritage and preferences
- Stereotyping, labelling and prejudice
- Tackling discrimination

INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY

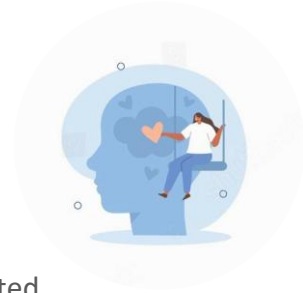


- Equality and Human Rights
- Personal Development
- Respect and Dignity
- Rights, choice, consent and individuality
- Values and principles

Mental Health Awareness

Mental health awareness is an ongoing effort to reduce the stigma around mental illness and mental health conditions by sharing our personal experiences.

Often, because of misconceptions about mental health and mental fitness, people often suffer in silence and their conditions go untreated. Mental health awareness is an important social movement to both improve understanding and increase access to healthcare.



Here are four important benefits of mental health awareness:

- **Understand your symptoms** - Sometimes there is magic in having a diagnosis. Despite the stigma around the term, it's simply a shorthand for a collection of symptoms that occur together.



Mental health conditions can be difficult to pinpoint and sometimes impossible to find on a test, a diagnosis can be incredibly validating. It can help people feel less alone and make it easier to find treatment. You should always pay attention to your symptoms to see if there is a pattern.

- **Starting a conversation** - Mental health awareness is an ongoing conversation, but up until recently, it's only been had in whispers. But because a common feature of many moods and anxiety disorders is distorted thinking, talking about it can be immensely therapeutic. Building a support network and speaking with a licensed mental health professional could be critical to alleviating symptoms of many mental health conditions.



Unfortunately, stigma creates silence. It also makes it difficult to ask for support at work or in other environments that might be made more challenging by a mental health diagnosis.

- **Better Education** - It's crucial for caregivers, employers, parents, family members, and loved ones to understand the impact that mental health has on daily life.

However, while mental health conditions can make daily life more difficult, they also don't have to prevent you from having a fulfilling and engaging life.



When the people in your life understand and prioritize mental health care, it makes it easier to take the actions you need to do to take care of yourself and thrive.

Additional Mental Health Resources

You don't have to do it alone. Organisations and resources are available and waiting to help. These services offer confidential support from trained volunteers. You can talk about anything that's troubling you, no matter how difficult. Lean on the mental health providers below for support — or pass them along to a loved one who might be struggling.



- Call [116 123](tel:116123) to talk to [Samaritans](https://www.samaritans.org), or email: jo@samaritans.org for a reply within 24 hours
- Text "[SHOUT](https://www.shoutcrisis.org)" to [85258](tel:85258) to contact the [Shout Crisis Text Line](https://www.shoutcrisis.org), or text "[YM](https://www.ymcrisis.org)" if you're under 19
- If you're under 19, you can also call [0800 1111](tel:08001111) to talk to Childline. The number will not appear on your phone bill.
- These services will only share your information if they are very worried about you or think you are in immediate danger.

You can also find support groups that might help to connect with people living with shared experiences. For example, some support groups specialise in certain conditions like schizophrenia, anxiety, depression, and substance use disorders.

Always, consult your doctor or trained mental health professional as well. It's important to keep your medical team informed of how you're feeling. Your overall health and well-being are critically important.



Celebrating Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

It's about creating environments and cultures where every individual can feel safe, experience a sense of belonging, and is empowered to achieve their full potential.

Embracing and valuing the differences that make each person special and unique. It also means acknowledging and appreciating differences between individuals and groups. It means embracing the rich cultural heritage and traditions through food, music, art or religion.

Celebrating EDI can enhance community ties by encouraging collaboration among different groups. This can lead to stronger social networks and a greater sense of belonging. Overall, embracing and celebrating EDI is crucial for creating fair, innovative, and harmonious societies.



Unconscious Bias

Unconscious Bias is implicit preference it refers to a bias which 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 a quick judgement and assessment of people and situations.



It is influenced by our socialisation, background, cultural environment and personal experiences. It may be responsible for negative assumptions and unwitting discrimination against people who may be considered different and do not share the same values, background and culture as ours.

When we embrace equality, diversity inclusion there are huge benefits for all of us like increased productivity, a rise in creativity, more innovation, fast problem solving and better decision making.

Unconscious
Automatic
Everyday decisions
Error prone

System One
FAST



System Two
SLOW

Conscious
Effortful
Complex decisions
Reliable

How to encourage and support equality, diversity and inclusion

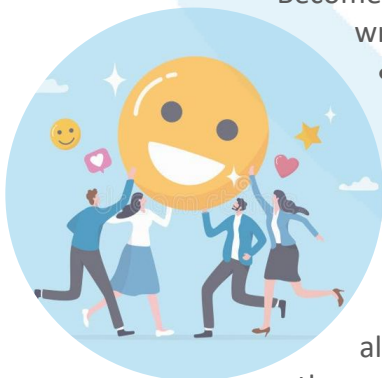
In most organisations, equality, diversity and inclusion are a key part of day-to-day life. These values and practices are supported by your managers and leaders, but we cannot forget the impact of employee involvement.

When employees are engaged at all levels this is the most effective way to reach critical mass and communicate the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion. Often employees are eager to join in the process but lack the know-how and confidence to act upon this.

It is important that you know that there are many ways to contribute and support efforts and it does not necessarily require expertise in the field. Below are some key steps of how you could support EDI.

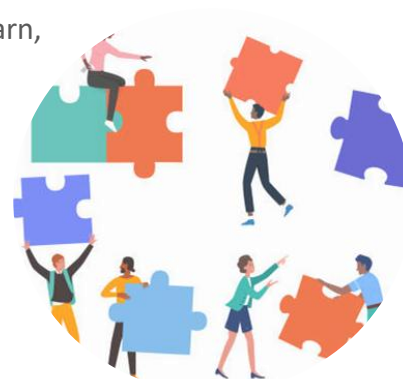


- **Equality, diversity and inclusion goals and vision** - Understanding how EDI impacts your role, and how your role impacts the success of the EDI initiative.
- **Participation** - Get involved with employee engagement surveys and respond as openly and honestly as possible. Find someone who you can comfortably express concerns and/or elicit advice in supporting your efforts.
- **Actively engage in the EDI effort** - You can take part in volunteering or join in with committees, events or activities. You could become a mentor or mentee. These activities require a commitment of time but represent a valuable opportunity for personal and professional development.
- **Become culturally competent** - Take the time to learn about different cultures, races, religions and backgrounds represented by your colleagues. Ask your coworkers to share some of the customs and practices associated with their cultures.
Become familiar with diversity-related terms and, if you get it wrong, apologise and ask for help.



- **Treat people in a way they wish to be treated** – This could be rather than the way you wish to be treated. Common social activities and practices that are comfortable for you may not be comfortable for everyone. Do not tell offensive jokes that may alienate those who are different from you, even if they are not present at the time. Most importantly, be respectful always. EDI exists everywhere not just in the workplace. Take these diversity principles into your community and your home.
- **Drive positive change in your organisation** - Be a spokesperson for EDI issues that are not necessarily your own. Any organisation will find it difficult to ignore the powerful voice created when groups representing different diversity dimensions unite.

- **Welcome ideas that are different from your own** – When you support co-workers the creativity that comes with diversity can help you generate new ideas or improve a process already in place. It can also make work more interesting, engaging, and fun.
- **Understand the diversity elements you personally bring to the organisation** - Diversity comes not only in the form of culture, race, and gender but also includes elements such as socio-economic background, education level, geographic location, sexual orientation, thought, and many others. Each of us brings to the table a lifetime of experiences and knowledge. Each of us is different and adds value to the organisation because of these differences, when these differences are recognised and celebrated everyone feels included.
- **Commit to continuous improvement** - Be willing to learn, accept feedback, and listen to the concerns of those around you. Even the most enlightened individual can find opportunities for growth.
- **Communicate and educate** – EDI work is a journey, not a destination. It takes time, patience, and perseverance. Be tolerant of coworkers who do not yet appreciate the value of EDI or who may not always behave respectfully. Often, negative behaviour comes from ignorance rather than hostility. A willingness to educate can go a long way.



If you need any help or advice, please contact –

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Segments from this article taken from:

<https://www.bucks.ac.uk/study/apprenticeships/safeguarding-student-welfare/examples-british-values#:~:text=What%20are%20British%20Values%3F,Respect%20and%20Tolerance%2C%20Individual%20Liberty>



<https://www.betterup.com/blog/mental-health-awareness#:~:text=Mental%20health%20awareness%20is%20the,and%20their%20conditions%20go%20untreated.>

<https://gender.cgiar.org/sites/default/files/wp-uploads/2017/02/10-Ways-Employees-can-Support-Diversity-and-Inclusion.pdf>