



# Welcome to Gender Awareness

Challenging Sexism and Misogyny in the Workplace

With

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# Introductions

- Non-profit - Community Interest Company
- Established in 2012
- UK-wide training, consultancy and research
- Lived experience led
- Specialists in equality, diversity, equity and inclusion
- Working across all sectors
- Research, evidence-based, published
- Collaborative and partnership driven



# Learning Together

- Please mute your mic to minimise background noise
- Ask questions in the chat
  - Safe/brave space
  - Accept differences
  - Be aware and sensitive
- Take care of yourself
  - Reference to suicide, gendered and sexual violence



# Learning Outcomes

- To understand the definitions of sex and gender and their evolution.
- To understand why gender bias is a problem and who it impacts.
- To discuss the importance of language in the context of gender bias and stereotypes.
- To reflect on the current context and discussion around gender equality
- To begin to explore Intersectionality, the overlap of gender bias with other forms of discrimination, examples and how equalities legislation applies.
- To learn how we can make positive change.

# Agenda

- Definitions
- Gender Roles
- Contemporary context
- Practical action
- Commitments and continued learning

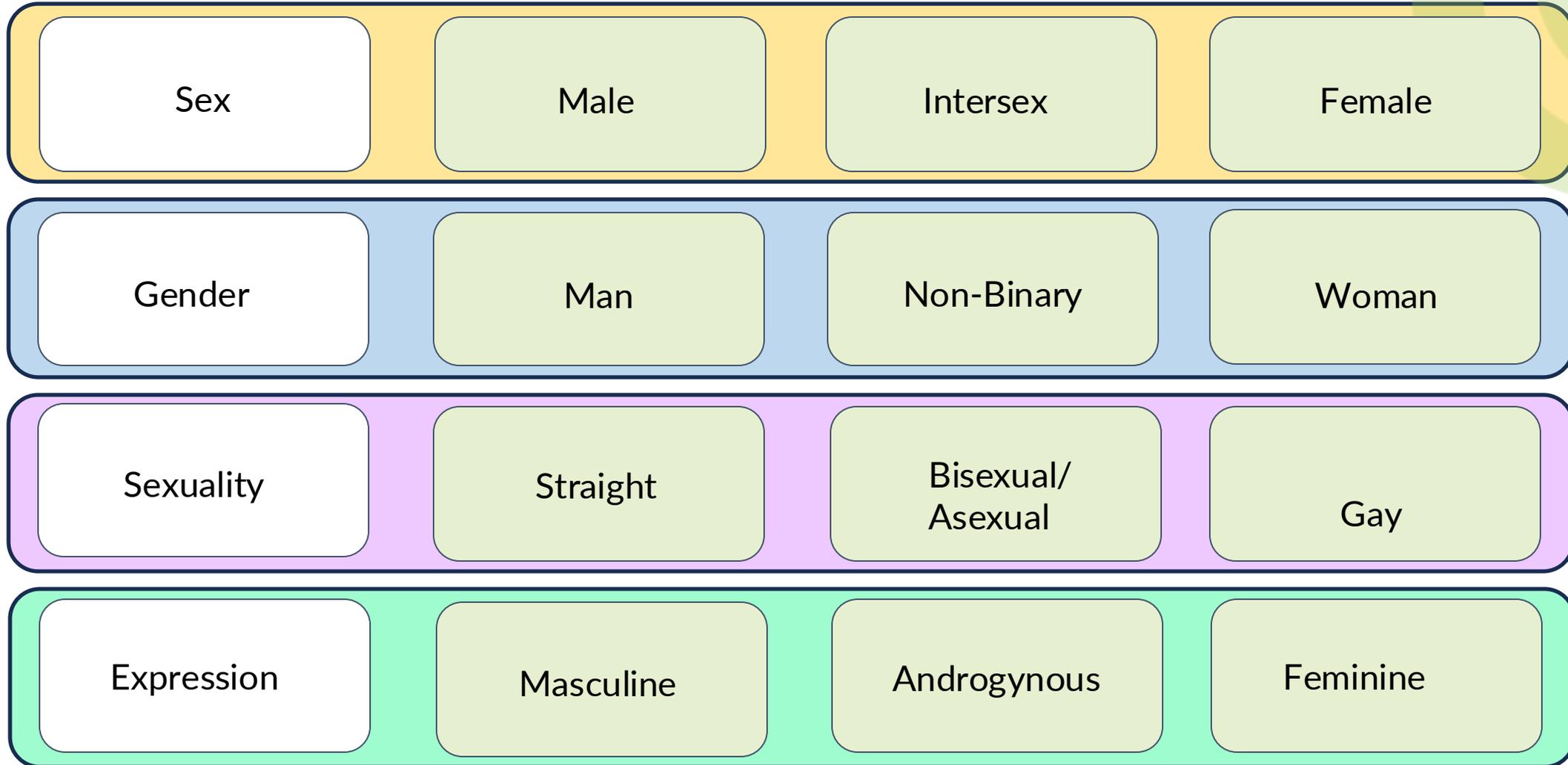




**What is sex?**

**What is gender?**

# Sex and Gender



# Gender diversity through history:



[Gala c3000BCE](#)



[Tlazolteotl - Aztec mythology](#)



[Roman Galli c290CE](#)



[Michael Dillon \(1915-1962\)](#)



[James Barry - 1812](#)



[Lili Elbe - 1926](#)



[Carmen Rupe - 1960](#)



[Elliot Page - Present day](#)

# Gender diversity in other cultures:



[Muxe](#) (Mexico)



[Sioux winkte](#) (Dakota)



[Hijra](#) (India)



[Mahu](#) (Hawaii)



[Fa'afafine](#) (Samoa)



[Sekrata](#) (Madagascar)

# Gender Roles



What are some positive ideas we have about men?

What are some negative ideas we have about men?



What are some positive ideas we have about women?

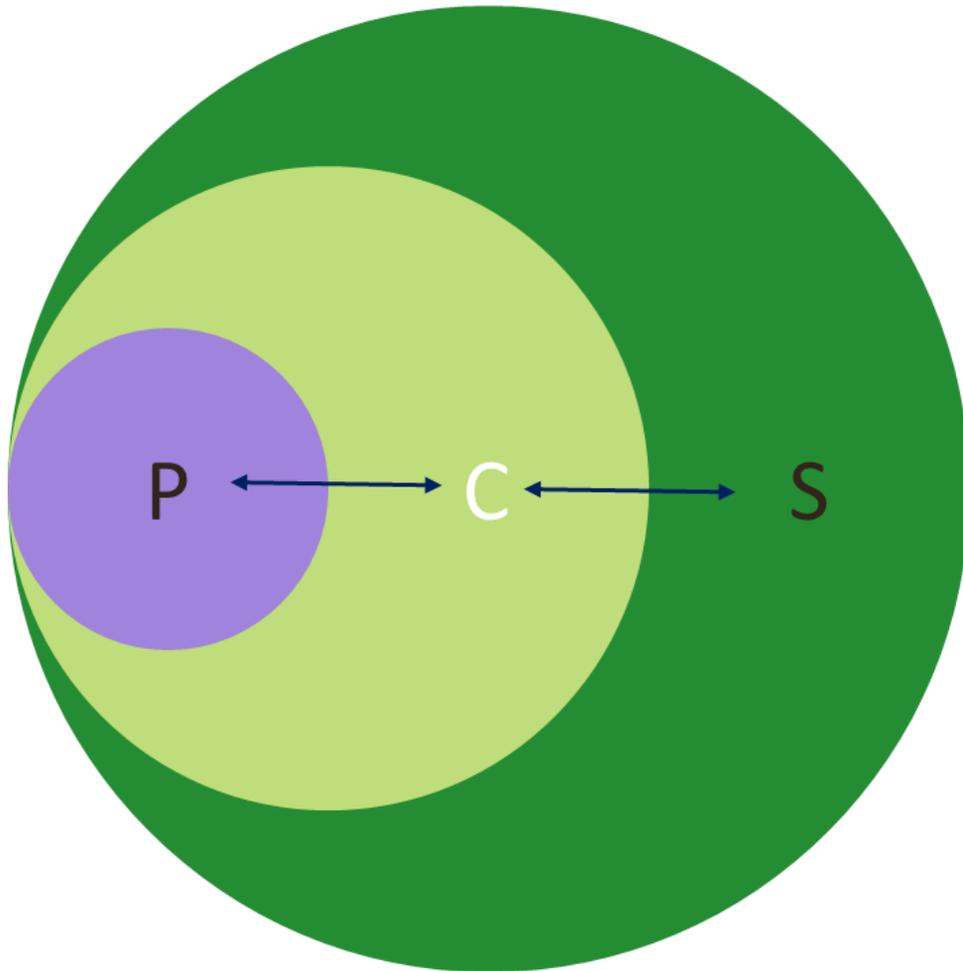
What are some negative ideas we have about women?

# Sexism



"Sexism is linked to beliefs around the fundamental nature of women and men and the roles they should play in society. Sexist assumptions about women and men, which manifest themselves as gender stereotypes, can rank one gender as superior to another. Such hierarchical thinking can be conscious and hostile, or it can be unconscious, manifesting itself as unconscious bias. Sexism can touch everyone, but women are particularly affected."

--- European Institute for Gender Equality



### Personal

Individual level of thoughts, feelings, attitudes and actions.



### Cultural

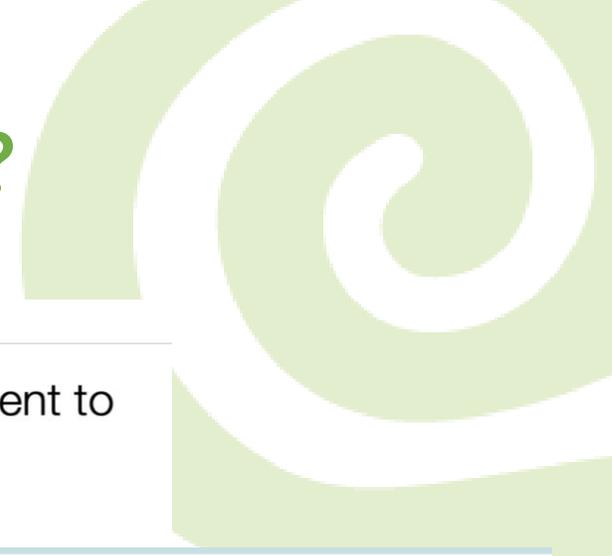
Shared ways of seeing things, thinking and doing within a community.



### Structural

The socio-political dimensions of power and influence.

# Where do we see sexism manifest in our society?



**Parents and parenting**  
Campaign to get more baby changing access in men's toilets launched in UK

[UCL Home](#) » [UCL News](#) » [Social media algorithms amplify misogynistic content to teens](#)

## Social media algorithms amplify misogynistic content to teens

5 February 2024

Social media algorithms amplify extreme content, such as misogynistic posts, which normalises harmful ideologies for young people, finds a new report led by a UCL researcher.

## Police Scotland officers fear being targeted for calling out sexism

© 31 May 2023



[FORBES](#) > [BUSINESS](#) > [HOLLYWOOD & ENTERTAINMENT](#)

## Study Shows Decline For Speaking Roles For Female Characters In 2023 Films

Rosa Escandon Contributor ©  
*I write about women in comedy.*

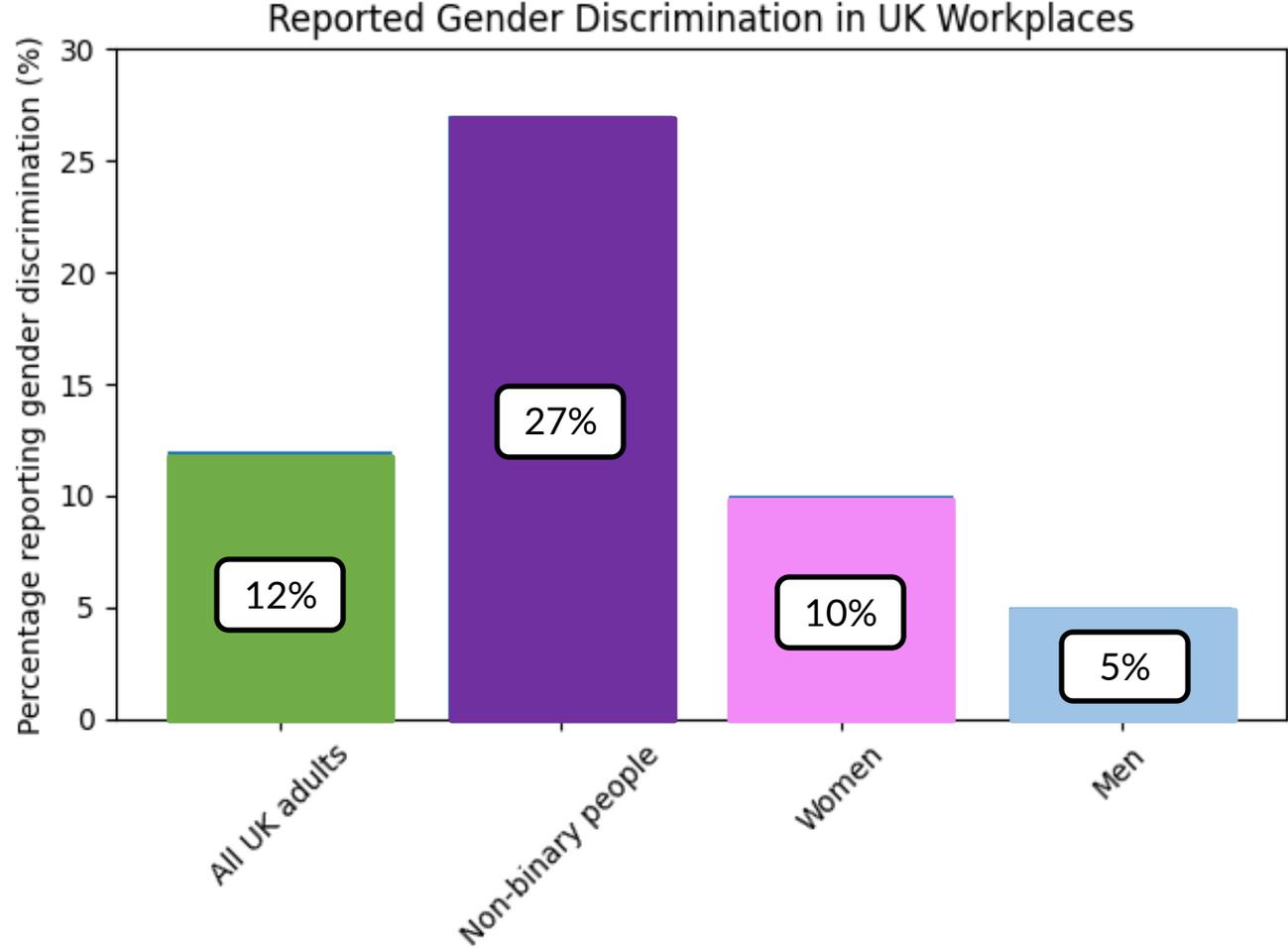


Feb 28, 20:

# Sexism in Society

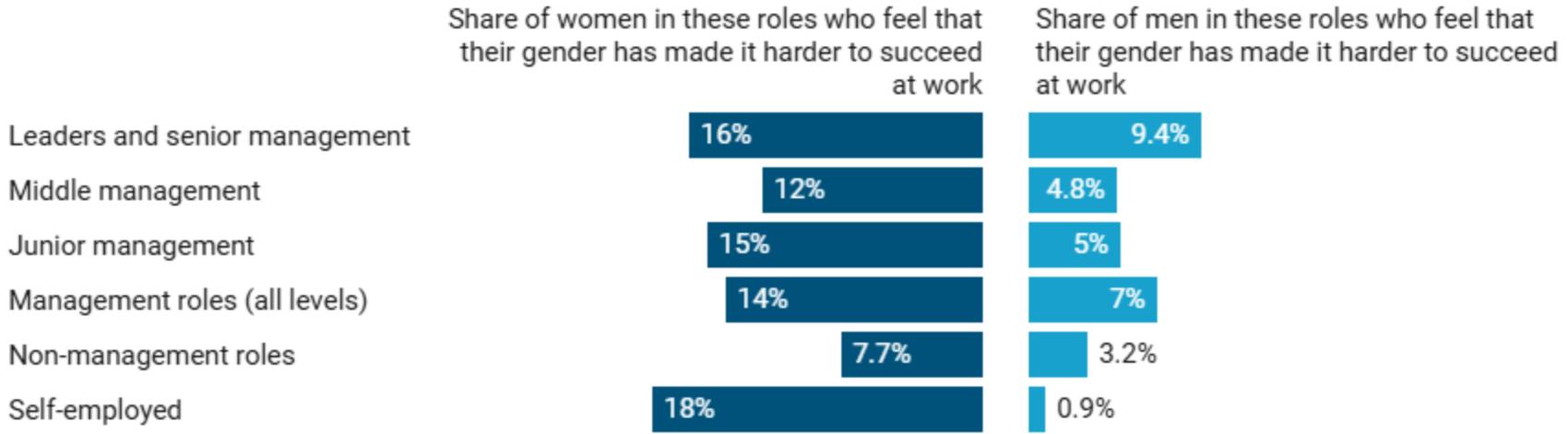
Researchers asked a UK-representative sample of 4000 people if they had experienced hiring discrimination or unfavourable treatment at work on the basis of their gender.

[Source](#)



# Sexism in Society

Share of UK workers who feel that their gender has made it harder to succeed at work:



*n = 2,418 UK employees + 203 self-employed workers | From a survey of 4,000 UK adults (nationally representative by age/gender/region), commissioned by Ciphre and conducted by OnePoll in August and November 2024*

# Gendered Violence

- Around **10.6% of people aged 16+** experienced at least one of **domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking** in the last year.
  - **12.8% of women** reported this, compared with **8.4% of men** – showing a gendered pattern of victimisation. ([UK Crime Magazine report on ONS findings](#))
- An estimated **≈ 25.6% of women aged 16 and over** in England and Wales *have experienced sexual assault (including attempts)* since the age of 16. That's roughly **1 in 4 women**.
  - This includes a range of unwanted sexual behaviours from unwanted touching to rape or attempted rape. ([ONS](#))
- Women are nearly **twice as likely as men to experience workplace abuse** (19% vs 10%). ([UCL](#))
- Violent crimes against women and girls made up **about 20% of all recorded crimes** in England and Wales. ([ITN Business](#))

# Men and Patriarchy

- Expectations around masculinity can harm men and boys
- Difficulty feeling and expressing full range of emotions
- Men account for 75% of deaths by suicide despite women reporting more suicidal ideation and attempts ([ONS](#)) – pointing to the combined role played by men being less likely to report or seek help, and choosing more lethal methods.
- Expectations around dominance, assertiveness, power
- Whilst women and LGBT people have spent decades working on gender and liberation, has there been a similar discussion for men and masculinity in a changing world?

# Pushback

- It's clear that the push for gender equality has led to huge progress over the past 100 years.
- However, it's clear that there's still a way to go, and it's entirely possible for hard-won rights to slide back and be lost.
- **What are the challenges to gender equality today?**



# Gender Equality and contemporary pushback

2025 Report by Plan UK

- 1 in 4 people in the UK think gender equality hurts men
- 1 in 5 want to return to traditional gender norms
- 1 in 10 say have women have too much power

# Boys, Masculinity, and the 'Manosphere'

October 2025 [Voice of the Boys Report](#) by Male Allies UK

- 81% of boys don't feel there are enough spaces to be a boy today.
- 72% of boys don't have more than one person who knows them 'really well'.
- 79% of boys aren't clear what masculinity is.
- 65% of boys don't think school is preparing them for the future.
- 54% of boys think boys have it harder than girls today.
- 82% of boys don't trust politicians in the UK.

# Intersectionality



“the ways in which systems of inequality based on gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, class and other forms of discrimination “intersect” to create unique dynamics and effects.”

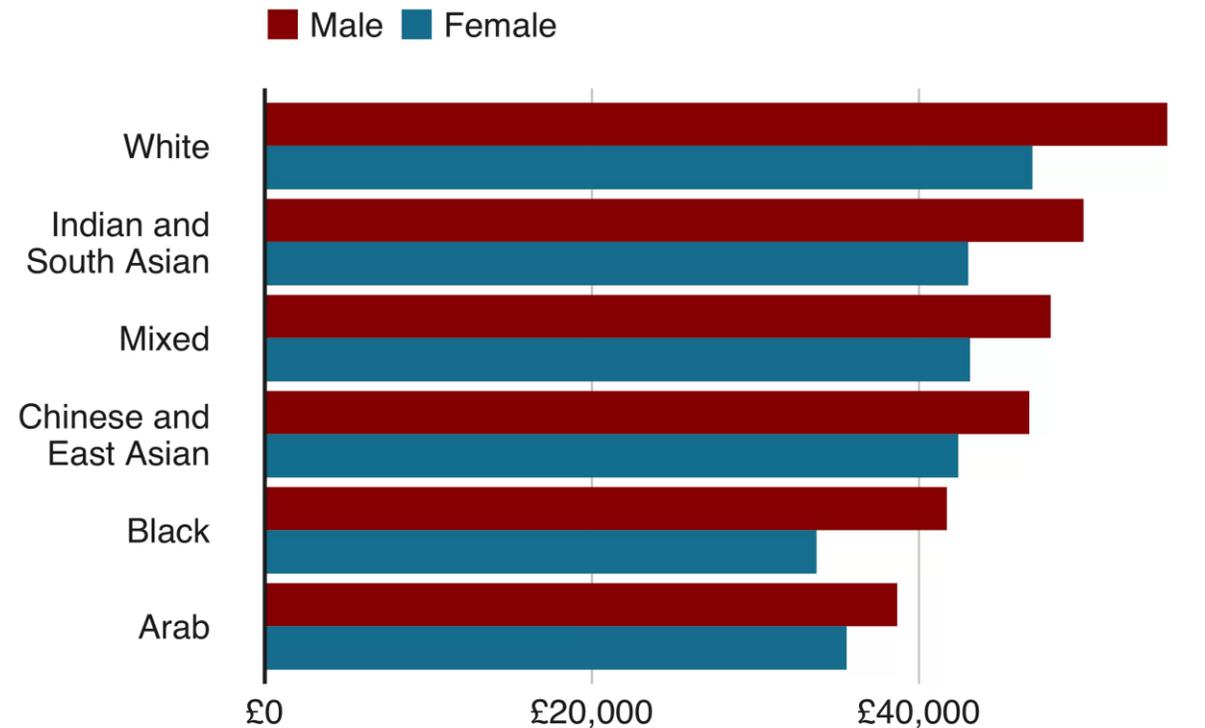
– *Centre for Intersectional Justice*

# Intersectionality in Practice

- The gender pay gap is quite widely talked about
- But what about intersections with race?

## Black and Arab academics paid a quarter less

Average salaries of Russell Group academic staff



Source: BBC Freedom of Information requests of 22 Russell Group universities **BBC**

# Impact on Individuals

## Women

Depression, anxiety, stress

Low self-esteem, body image issues, eating disorders

Gendered and sexual violence

Health inequalities

Education, career, economic discrimination

Restricted freedom of movement

## Men

Depression, anxiety, difficulty asking for help

Restricted emotional range

Substance use and addiction

Insecurity and body image issues

Physical violence (at the hands of other men)

# Impact on Organisations

- Damages working relationships
- Limits talent progression and undermines organisational performance
- Can cause people to withdraw, stop speaking up, avoid colleagues
  
- Staff leaving, needing to be replaced at a cost of time and money
- Reputational damage to individuals and businesses as a whole
- **Uncapped** payouts for successful discrimination claims

	<b>Highest Award</b>	<b>Median Award</b>	<b>Average Award</b>
<b>Unfair dismissal</b>	£179,124	£6,746	£13,749
<b>Race Discrimination</b>	£431,768	£10,253	£29,532
<b>Sex Discrimination</b>	£995,128	£16,161	£53,403
<b>Disability Discrimination</b>	£964,465	£17,218	£44,483
<b>Religion and Belief Discrimination</b>	£20,000	£8,500	£10,750
<b>Age Discrimination</b>	£261,949	£86,349	£102,891
<b>Sexual Orientation Discrimination</b>	£47,297	£26,693	£27,070

[Employment Tribunal and Employment Appeal Tribunal 2023 to 2024](#)

# Gendered Language and Judgement

- No gendered nouns - but a lot of gendered language!
- Many words to describe women are *not* used to describe men and vice versa
- Most of the worst insults are based on women (or their body parts)
- Gender expectations and judgments are embedded early

# What do we do about all of this?

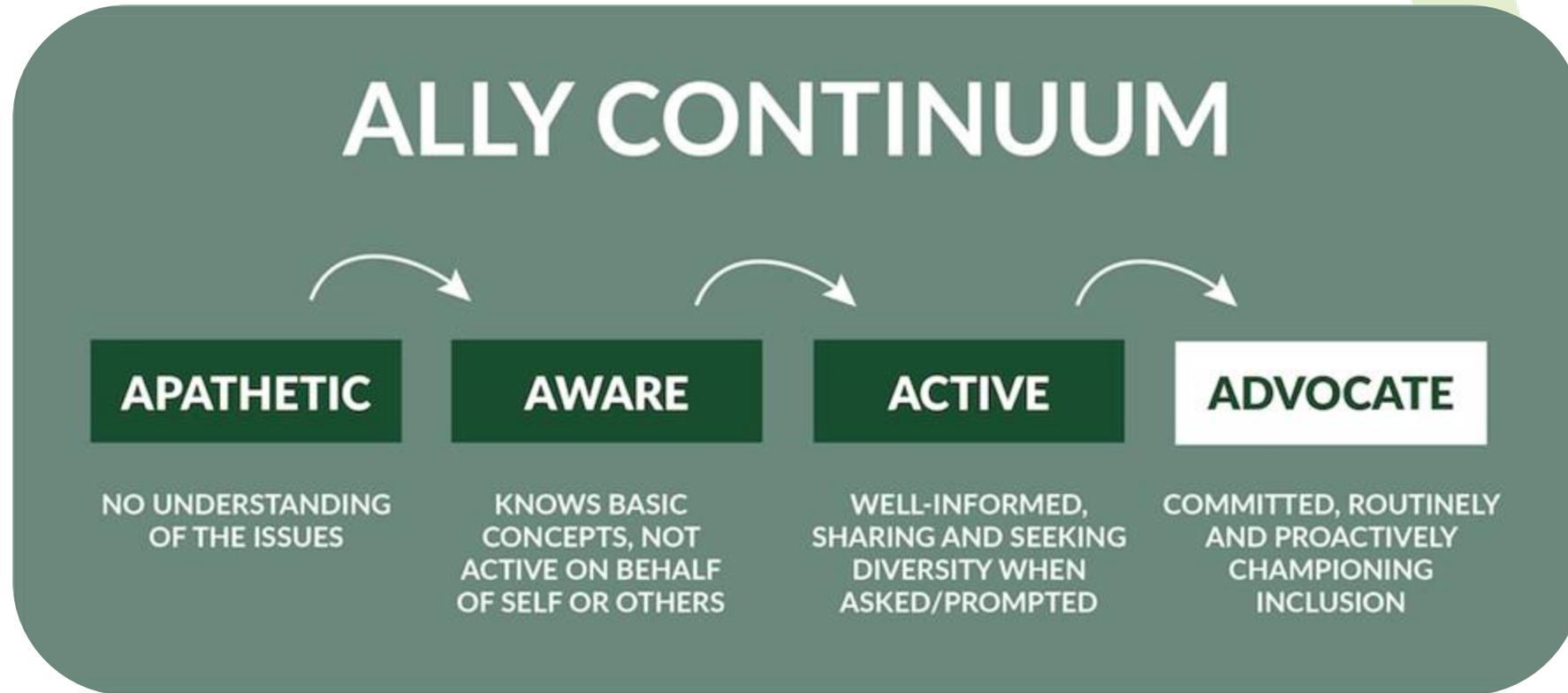
Healthy role models

Policy to tackle structural inequalities e.g. shared parental leave, childcare support, labour rights

Clear values of autonomy and self-determination



# Being an Ally



# Equity in Action

- **Everyday Workplace Culture**
  - Challenge interruptions or idea appropriation in meetings, ensure equal speaking time and participation
  - Rotate office "housekeeping" tasks
  - Avoid gendered assumptions about roles or competence
- **Recruitment and Hiring**
  - Structured interviews with standardised questions and scoring criteria
  - Blind recruitment where possible
  - Diverse interview panels

# Equity in Action

- **Data, monitoring, and transparency**
  - Conduct regular gender pay gap reviews, and publish data and action plans
  - Review performance ratings for patterns of bias (e.g. behaviour vs potential)
- **Leadership and Policy**
  - Clear, confidential reporting routes for discrimination
  - Training for leaders on inclusive leadership and handling cases of discrim.
  - Ensure part-time workers have equal access to promotion and development
    - Transparent promotion criteria and career pathways
  - Sponsorship or mentoring programmes for underrepresented genders

# What to do?

## Calling Out

- Zero tolerance in the moment
- May be perceived as confrontational
- "What did you just say?"
- "That's really offensive"
- Valuable depending on the situation

## Calling In

- More conciliatory – meeting people where they're at
- "I can see you might not have meant it but that came across like..."
- Educational, kind. Can require time and energy.

# Comments and Questions





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