

Supporting Anti-racism

Language and terminology to support your work

Terms related to race, racism and prejudice

Race - “Race is a social construct (i.e. man-made invention) based on skin colour and facial features (shape of eyes, nose, lips, hair texture, etc.). Even if it isn’t biologically “real”, its impact on people is very much a reality. Race is a system of social categorisation which advantages certain groups of people and disadvantages other groups of people.” (Definition from the [Anti-Racist Educator’s Glossary](#)).

Racism - “Racism is different from racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. Racism involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination through the institutional policies and practices of the society and by shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices.” (Definition from Dismantling Racism Works (dRworks) [online here](#)). Further definition of racism from the Anti-Racist Educator [online here](#).

White supremacy - “...While most people associate white supremacy with extremist groups...white supremacy is ever present in our institutional and cultural assumptions that assign value, morality, goodness, and humanity to the white group while casting people and communities of color as worthless (worth less), immoral, bad, and inhuman and “undeserving.” Drawing from critical race theory, the term “white supremacy” also refers to a political or socio-economic system where white people enjoy structural advantage and rights that other racial and ethnic groups do not, both at a collective and an individual level.” (Definition from [Racial Equity Tools](#))

Racialisation - “Racialization is the very complex and contradictory process through which groups come to be designated as being of a particular “race” and on that basis subjected to differential and/or unequal treatment. Put simply, “racialization [is] the process of manufacturing and utilizing the notion of race in any capacity” (Dalal, 2002, p. 27). While white people are also racialized, this process is often rendered invisible or normative to those designated as white. As a result, white people may not see themselves as part of a race but still maintain the authority to name and racialize “others.”” (Definition from [Racial Equity Tools](#))

Prejudice - “Prejudice is often understood as an unfavourable or unreasonable opinion, feeling or attitude especially of a hostile nature, regarding an ethnic, racial, social or religious group.” Full definition from the Anti-Racist Educator [online here](#).

Xenophobia - “Xenophobia is prejudice against people who are views as being ‘foreign’ or ‘from another country’. This often gets confused with racism: racism has more to do with skin colour and facial features while xenophobia has more to do with nationality, language/accents, culture and ethnicity.” (Definition from the [Anti-Racist Educator’s Glossary](#)).

Forms of racism

Anti-Black racism / Anti-Blackness - “Anti-Black racism is prejudice, attitudes, beliefs, stereotyping and discrimination that is directed at people of African descent and is rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement and its legacy. Anti-Black racism is deeply entrenched in...institutions, policies and practices, to the extent that anti-Black racism is either functionally normalized or rendered invisible to the larger White society.” (Definition from [Ontario Government Glossary](#))

Islamophobia / Anti-Muslim racism - “the expression of systemic discrimination against Muslims and those racialised as Muslims. It is the marginalisation of these subjects in daily life through education, policing, border agencies, health, the courts, politics, and countless other areas which touch them.” (Definition form the [Anti-Racist Educator’s Glossary](#))

Anti-Indigenous racism - “...the ongoing race-based discrimination, negative stereotyping, and injustice experienced by Indigenous Peoples...It includes ideas and practices that establish, maintain and perpetuate power imbalances, systemic barriers and inequitable outcomes that stem from the legacy of colonial polices and practices...” (Definition from [Ontario Government Glossary](#)).

Antisemitic racism - “hostility to Jews on the assumption that they constitute a separate ‘race’...Modern antisemitism tends to be quasi-racial, in that it is Jews as a people who are the objects of prejudice, rather than the religion. It involves the belief that Jews are inherently and fundamentally different from non-Jews, and that this difference is genetic (‘racial’), as well as cultural.” (Definition from Runnymede Trust [Commission on Antisemitism](#)).

Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT) racism - “Anti-Gypsy Roma Travellerism is hostility, prejudice, discrimination or racism specifically directed at Gypsy, Roma, Traveller people.” (Definition from [Herts Gate](#). More info on GRT racism available [online here](#).)

Terms related to anti-racism, equity and justice

Anti-racism - “a proactive stance against racism in all forms seen in actions and work rather than statements and policy.” (Definition from the Curatorial Research Centre’s [Decolonising Glossary](#))

Racial justice and **racial equity** can also be used to describe anti-racism and are terms used in some of this module’s quotes and resources.

Equality and. Equity - the term equity is used throughout this module and is an important concept for anti-racism work. [Social Change UK](#) explains:

“The difference between equality and equity must be emphasised. Although both promote fairness, equality achieves this through treating everyone the same regardless of need, while equity achieves this through treating people differently dependent on need. However, this different treatment may be the key to reaching equality.”

Lived experience / Lived experience of racism - Lived experience can be defined as “the experience(s) of people on whom a social issue, or combination of issues, has had a direct impact”. (Definition from Baljeet Sandhu (2017), [The value of lived experience in social change](#))

Intersectionality - “how various forms of discrimination based on race, gender, class, disability, sexuality, gender identity and other forms of identity, do not work independently but interact to create particular forms of social oppression and exclusion.” (Definition from [Oxford Reference](#))

Privilege – “Unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to ALL members of a dominant group (e.g. white privilege, male privilege, etc.). Privilege is usually invisible to those who have it because we’re taught not to see it, but nevertheless it puts them at an advantage over those who do not have it.” (Definition from [Racial Equity Tools](#))

Microaggression – “The everyday verbal, nonverbal and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.” (Definition from [Racial Equity Tools](#))

Further terms to support your work

Colonialism – Colonialism is the...practice of European expansion into territories already inhabited by Indigenous peoples for the purpose of acquiring new lands and resources. This expansion is rooted in the violent suppression of Indigenous peoples’ governance, legal, social and cultural structures. Colonialism attempts to force Indigenous peoples to accept and integrate into institutions that are designed to force them to conform with the structures of the colonial state.” (Definition from [Ontario Government Glossary](#). Further definition available at Racial Equity Tools [online here](#)).

Critical Race Theory (CRT) - “a framework developed in the US and used increasingly in the UK to expose racial power structures in society. Critical Race Theory considers racism to be normal, endemic and “an ingrained feature” of society, which cannot be rectified solely with equal opportunity laws because covert racism will persist unless there is fundamental and radical change.” (Definition from the [Anti-Racist Educator’s Glossary](#))

Modern slavery – “the severe exploitation of other people for personal or commercial gain. Modern slavery is all around us, but often just out of sight. People can become entrapped making our clothes, serving our food, picking our crops, working in factories, or working in houses as cooks, cleaners or nannies.” (Definition from Anti-Slavery International [online here](#)).

Further Language and Terminology resources

The following glossaries include a range of terms which can support your anti-racist work:

- The Curatorial Research Centre’s [Decolonising Glossary](#)
- The Anti-Racist Educator’s [Anti-racist Glossary](#)
- Racial Equity Tools [Glossary](#)