



University of London Allyship Toolkit

Allyship in the workplace is the process and practice of building professional relationships on the foundation of trust, accountability and consistency with marginalised individuals or groups. The work and efforts of an ally are categorised as allyship when those who they are seeking to be allies with recognise it. In other words, allyship is not self-determined or self-defined.

For allyship to generate long-term constructive impact, it must go beyond the surface level and aim at transforming the systems and aspect of institutional culture that allow racism and racist behaviours to continue. It is not sufficient to be antiracist or to dislike racism. It is imperative to play an active role to collectively support non-optical allyship (that is, go beyond the surface, be visible and take action) to achieve real change.

Allyship is an iterative process where the quality of action matters in affecting change and delivering optimum behaviours. This guide provides a simple toolkit to enable staff to build their own strategy and practice, and to embed allyship in their professional (and personal) environments.

Three Things to Start Doing

1. Learn more about racial inequality, to be able to empathise with the issues.
Use books, podcasts and mentoring (reciprocal and reverse) to gain authentic insights.
2. Understand what white privilege is to appreciate the unequal playing field.
Embrace any discomfort, guilt and embarrassment that may initially rise.
3. Use positive language and be vocal about your intent as an ally.
Be present with the person, and understand what inspires and motivates the people around you.

Three Things to Stop Doing

1. Stop being a bystander when you hear a stereotype, inappropriate joke or derogatory term.
Avail the active bystander training.
2. Stop being afraid to speak up because you are afraid you might get the words wrong.
It is important to be part of the conversation and rather be corrected. Be prepared to be uncomfortable and to learn each time.
3. Stop thinking that your actions will not make a difference.
Every effort and every bit of action matters, even more so at individual levels.

Three Things to Continue Doing

1. Listen to your colleagues and team, and embed an appreciation of racial inequalities, intersectionality and white privilege.
2. Champion racial equality beyond major national and international events. Develop a long-term strategy to continue to build on initiatives in motion, e.g. inclusive recruitment.
3. Review progress, by factoring in the composition of your team and measuring staff satisfaction. Address issues actively.