



Key messages

Racism and sexism at work are issues for you and your organisation irrespective of the diversity of your workforce. Women face inequality and discrimination in the labour market every day. It's time to act.

These key messages are where you should begin. You can include them in staff training, or an all-staff communication about your commitment to challenge and prevent racism and sexism in the workplace, or as a starting point to think about what you need to do in your organisation.

What you can do

1. You can show leadership by openly acknowledging that employers have a responsibility to challenge racism and sexism at work and communicating to staff the actions you will take to do this.
2. Racism in the workplace means that women may not feel safe disclosing that they've experienced racism and/or sexism at work. You can build trust by seeking honest feedback and reflections from staff, and demonstrating that you are taking action.
3. You can also build trust by showing that you're willing to be accountable. This means following through with meaningful actions and progress updates on your work to deliver equality for women in your organisation.

4. Action to tackle incidents of sexist and racist discrimination is only part of the solution. You should use this guidance to take an anti-racist approach to reviewing your workplace culture and employment practices. This means proactively identifying and tackling racism. This involves taking an objective view of your organisation and being honest about the challenges you face.
5. You can work with experts on racial and gender inequality to support progress towards your goals as you improve and expand action in your organisation.

What you need to know about racism and sexism at work

6. Racist and sexist attitudes and behaviours, and biased employment policies and processes, combine to create intersectional inequalities for women in the workplace.
7. Just because you haven't received a report of racist and/or sexist behaviour or discrimination doesn't mean it hasn't happened in your workplace. A majority of racially minoritised women have experienced racism and/or sexism at work.
8. Racist or sexist bullying and harassment isn't just an isolated issue between two people but a part of a wider problem with workplace culture, and racial and gender inequality in the workplace.
9. Racism is embedded in workplace reporting systems, creating barriers to reporting. Most women won't report incidents of racism and/or sexism because they don't think their employer will take the matter seriously, or they fear a backlash for doing so.
10. Racially minoritised women still face deeply rooted prejudices and racism in their lives, which contributes to their inequality at work.

Close the Gap works in Scotland on women's labour market participation. We work with policymakers, employers and unions to influence and enable action that will address the causes of women's inequality at work.

Close the Gap
166 Buchanan Street
Glasgow
G1 2LW

0141 572 4730

info@closethegap.org.uk

www.closethegap.org.uk

Twitter: @closethepaygap



Close the Gap

Close the Gap (SCIO) (known as Close the Gap) is a Scottish charity, no SC046842.

Published December 2022