Unconscious Bias Awareness Resource

Purpose: This guide supports fair, evidence-based decision-making to consider how you are able to support the Access, Belonging and Community Committee's initiatives. Together, we can remove barriers, build trust and connection, and create a shared purpose in solidarity.

What is Unconscious Bias?
All individuals have biases, meaning that they lean towards familiar ways of processing information through learned behaviours and practices. The ABC Committee's goal is to bring awareness to the different biases that may influence thought processes with the hope that individuals will recognize and reduce or eliminate negative impacts on decision-making.

The PAUSE Framework
P – Pause: Notice your first reaction.
A – Ask: What assumptions might I be making?
U – Understand: What information or perspectives am I missing?
S – Seek Evidence: What objective facts support my conclusion
E – Evaluate: Would I decide the same way if one detail were different?

Bias Check Before Making Decisions
- Am I relying on evidence rather than assumptions?
- Have I applied the same standards to everyone?
- Have I considered another perspective?
- Am I using consistent criteria?
- Can I clearly explain my decision based on objective facts?

Common Biases

Bias	Example	How to Reduce It
Affinity Bias	Preferring someone because they are similar to you.	Use structured criteria and diverse perspectives.
Confirmation Bias	Looking only for information that supports a first impression.	Actively seek evidence that challenges your view.
Halo Effect	One positive trait influences your whole evaluation.	Assess each competency independently.
Horn Effect	One negative trait overshadows all strengths.	Review the full range of performance evidence.
Recency Bias	Overweighting recent events in performance reviews.	Use notes from the entire review period.
Anchoring Bias	Relying too heavily on the first piece of information.	Pause and consider all available facts.
Attribution Bias	Explaining others' mistakes as personal flaws but your own as situational.	Consider context before drawing conclusions.
Gender/Stereotype Bias	Making assumptions based on stereotypes.	Focus on objective behaviours and qualifications.