

IDENTIFY - TERMS AND DEFINITIONS TO SUPPORT CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RACISM

There is significant debate around the definitions of terms used in this app and more generally - including race, ethnicity, prejudice, bias and racism. These contested terms will shift further over time, but the following framework provides definitions for terms you will find in the Unteach Racism app and supporting resources, contextualised to education and teaching and learning in Aotearoa New Zealand.

How can I use this resource?

In our conversations with teachers and nationwide survey, many teachers who witness racism said they feel unequipped to respond. Racism was also largely defined as having negative pre-set assumptions or stereotypes about a culture that results in unfair treatment of individuals. This grounds racism in personal exchanges, rather than the structural, institutional or systemic. This resource therefore aims to expand understandings of racism and provide shared understandings of key terms and definitions, so that we can feel more equipped to first identify and then confront racism.

How does it relate to Our Code|Ngā Tikanga Matatika?

Commitment to the Teaching Profession

Contributing to a professional culture that supports and upholds this code

- leading and engaging in professional conversations about ethical conduct

Commitment to Society

Promoting and protecting the principles of human rights, sustainability and social justice

- promoting an understanding of exclusion or discrimination that may be experienced by people marginalised by their personal or social circumstances

| Term | Exploration | Teaching context |
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| Race | Race is a power construct which groups people into a hierarchy of superiority based primarily on skin colour and other attributes. There is no scientific or genetic basis to race but it has been and continues to be used to justify systems of power, privilege and oppression. “Race is a mirage but one that humanity has organised itself around in very real ways,” (Kendi 2019). | |
| Racism | Terms such as bias, prejudice and racism are often used interchangeably, as if they hold the same meaning. When we use the term racism throughout the Unteach Racism App and resources, it is beyond intentional acts of cruelty committed by individuals. Rather, racism is a system that creates and sustains racial inequities through a collection of racist ideas, actions or policies. | <p>Racism manifests in education in many different ways, which University of Waikato Te Kotahi Research Institute director associate professor Leonie Pihama (Te Atiawa, Waikato-Tainui, Ngā Māhanga a Tairi) and others explain in this article.</p> <p><u>Recent outpouring of young people’s varied experiences of racism in education</u> from name-calling and the devaluing of cultural practice by teachers, to systemic issues like under-resourcing of te reo classrooms or disproportionate suspensions of Pacific and Māori boys.</p> |
| Intrapersonal racism Also referred to as <i>internalised</i> racism | When individuals from disadvantaged or stigmatised groups come to accept the cumulative negative messages they are receiving about their race, culture and identity and over time come to think of themselves as less valued. Jones (2000) describes “internalised racism” as “the acceptance by members of the stigmatised races of negative messages about their own abilities and intrinsic self-worth”. | <p>I’ve noticed that when people are asked if they’re Māori or not, not many people admit it. But for me, I’m actually proud to be Māori, and I think everyone should be,”</p> <p><u>Kia Eke Panuku</u></p> |
| Interpersonal racism | The most overt form of racism. Interpersonal racism is defined as differential assumptions of the abilities and intentions of others based on their race and differential actions towards someone because of their race. These assumptions and actions can be used to exclude, stigmatise, treat unfairly, ignore and disrespect someone on the basis of their racial background. Familiar manifestations of interpersonal racism may include name calling, suspicion and surveillance and poor or no service. | <p>“It’s Indian Language Week is coming up, and instead of being happy and proud to celebrate my cultures week like the other cultures, many of us are already scared and embarrassed of the reaction other students are going to give when this week is going to be celebrated at assembly. Students will laugh, students will mock, students will criticise,”</p> <p><u>Education Conversation</u></p> |

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| <p>Institutional racism</p> <p>Can also be referred to as systemic racism</p> | <p>Institutional racism is the inherent bias of structures and institutions on which our society is built. In Aotearoa New Zealand the term institutional racism first entered public discourse in the 1970s and in two government reports published in the 1980s. Pūao-Te-Ata-Tū focused on overt, intentional forms of discrimination, defining institutional racism as:</p> <p>... the outcome of monocultural institutions which simply ignore and freeze out the cultures who do not belong to the majority. National structures are evolved which are rooted in the values, systems and viewpoints of one culture only (1988, p19)</p> <p>In 2021, in the report Whakatika: A Survey of Māori Experiences of Racism institutional racism is described as Legislation, policies, practices, material conditions, processes or requirements that maintain and provide avoidable and unfair differences and access to power across ethnic/racial groups.</p> | <p>In her PhD thesis, teacher Liana MacDonald explores how our education system was established with the view that it would “civilise” or “Europeanise” the indigenous Māori population and that the values and structures that formed the basis of schooling, disadvantaged Māori from the very beginning, with many of these structures still existing today.</p> <p>He Awa Ara Rau, a study of 70,000 Māori learners said Māori were disproportionately represented in low-ability classes, which hampered their ability to get the qualifications that lead to well-paid jobs.</p> <p>“How students are streamed is in itself problematic. Bias and deficit thinking play a key role in this. The number of Māori placed in foundation classes is way out of proportion to non-Māori. This is systemic racism,”</p> |
| <p>Societal racism</p> | <p>Is described in Whakatika: A Survey of Māori Experiences of Racism as:</p> <p>“The maintenance of negative stereotypes, attitudes, values, beliefs or ideologies that perpetuate the inferiority of a particular disadvantaged ethnic or racial group (e.g. Māori), which are upheld by the privileged ethnic or racial group (e.g. Pākehā).”</p> | <p>The study Teacher Expectations, Ethnicity and the Achievement Gap aimed to explore whether teachers had differential expectations for students from the different ethnic groups in Aotearoa New Zealand. A number of teachers interviewed raised the issue of criminal offending and appeared to associate crime primarily with Māori “I watch this Police 10/7... The suspects will always be Māori” Another spoke about a Māori learner who was underachieving and whose mother was “in and out of jail” and said, “I think that explains the whole thing”.</p> |
| <p>Hegemony</p> | <p>Hegemony is a social mechanism where those in power attempt to normalise their dominant worldview. It is the power and control of the dominant group over others in a diverse society and it is generally unnoticeable to those it serves. Cultural hegemony is the normalising in society of the culture and values of the dominant group.</p> | <p>Pedagogies in English medium are often monocultural and so Māori have had to make what Russell Bishop termed, a cultural ‘leap’ to succeed. Bishop asserted that many Māori learners have been unable to make this ‘leap’ and as a result have felt disconnected from the learning experience.</p> <p>“ We live in a multi-cultural society, but our education system doesn’t recognise that. It’s based on Pākehā values that contradict and/ or clash with many different cultures like Pasifika and Māori. ”</p> <p>Pacific tertiary student</p> <p>Education Conversation</p> |

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| <p>Implicit bias</p> | <p>Refers to a distortion in perception that people have in relation to particular groups of people, which can result in behaviours which have a discriminatory impact. It points towards an unconscious, cognitive basis for racism and other forms of discrimination and shows how they exist even in people who overtly reject racist attitudes. A significant body of research has demonstrated that those who hold very strong negative implicit biases about ethnic minorities consciously consider themselves fair-minded (Greenwald & Banaji, 2013). In this way, implicit biases are a form of unconscious racism that reflect widely held stereotypes of particular groups. The existence of implicit biases has been used to explain why inequities continue to exist in society even though declared, explicit racist attitudes are less prevalent.</p> | <p>“After I got excellence in Year 11, me and a mate got an invite to start going to meetings for excellence students. Well we turned up and the lady asked us what we were doing there because this was a meeting for excellence students... A few more times when we’d turn up she’d look at us and ask if we were in the right place. She never remembered our names. We were the only Maori and Pasifika boys there.”</p> <p><u>That’s Us</u></p> |
| <p>Intersectionality</p> | <p>Coined in 1989 by Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw it is a framework for conceptualising a person, group of people, or social problem as affected by a number of discriminations and disadvantages. It takes into account people’s overlapping identities and experiences in order to understand the complexity of prejudices they face.</p> | <p>Intersectionality is important in social justice education and in inclusive education as it supports us to think critically about the many different aspects of our learner’s identities and their varied experiences in society.</p> |
| <p>Homogeneity</p> | <p>Homogeneity is the state or quality of being homogeneous — consisting of parts that are all the same. In terms of culture it refers to one dominant way of thinking and acting. A homogeneous perspective stresses similarities among individuals and we act as if they all think, behave or learn in the same way.</p> | <p>“In schools like mine, a high decile special character (read: majority pākehā)....they also should learn why it is important to be able to recognise and differentiate between students of asian descent. (the amount of times Elizabeth has actually been called Joyce)” age 13-18</p> <p><u>Education Conversation</u></p> <p>“When I started college I didn’t know why but I kept getting put into woodwork and metalwork option courses that I’d never signed up for. I had won an academic scholarship in Year 9 and ended up getting excellence in NCEA 1, 2 and 3, but for a while someone there decided I needed to do a trade. There is nothing wrong with tradie work, I actually love it – that’s what I do during the holidays - but it’s unfair to look at me and decide: Oh yeah OK, that brown kid he can do woodwork even though he asked to do Financial Management,”</p> <p><u>That’s Us</u></p> |

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| Euro-centric | The term ‘Euro-centrism’ denotes a world-view which, implicitly or explicitly, posits European history and values as “normal” and superior to others. Tomlins-Jahnke (2007) describes “mainstream” as a euphemism or code word for centres/schools that privilege a western/Eurocentric education tradition. | In this article Nadine Hura recounts the euro-centric bias at the heart of the New Zealand education system through the experience of Hato Pāora College learners at a high school debating competition. |
| Whiteness | “Whiteness” is a social construction which recognises that there is power and privilege attached to being white. It can be perceived by some as abrasive or accusatory, however it is not synonymous with white or Pākehā people, nor does it imply that there is anything inherently bad or shameful about having white skin. There is a limited amount of research in Aotearoa New Zealand on the subject of whiteness but the research that does exist firmly contends there are advantages to belonging to the dominant white or Pākehā majority. | Dr. Ann Milne has developed this image to name the covert “white spaces” that permeate thinking and drive decision-making in Aotearoa New Zealand, the ones we accept as normal or traditional. Conversations about “whiteness” are important in education as they go beyond culturally responsive practice and support us to critically reflect on the experience of our learners |
| Privilege | Privilege is defined as the benefits that some individuals have access to simply through belonging to the dominant majority group. In the process of colonisation, the language, culture, legal and education systems, decision-making processes and delivery of medical services were all established to cater to this norm and white New Zealanders continue to benefit from this, at the expense of others. | Privilege manifests in the learning environment in a multitude of ways. Just one example in Aotearoa New Zealand, is how success for our learners is generally determined through Pākehā ideology i.e. we tend to focus on measurable, known and quantifiable outcomes such as NCEA results, literacy and numeracy data and levels of engagement in education. These statistics, in and of themselves, still reflect the educational wellbeing of young Māori and all young people, as understood and defined by Pākehā. The make-up of the education workforce in and of itself privileges Pākehā learners as 73% of teachers identify as NZ European , which means more often than not they will encounter teachers who look and sound like them. |
| Affirmative action | Both the Human Rights Act and the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act recognise that to overcome discrimination positive actions may be needed to enable particular groups to achieve equal outcomes with other groups in our society. These positive actions are called ‘special measures’ or ‘affirmative action’. They are not discriminatory if they assist people in certain groups to achieve equality. | The Code of Professional Responsibility Examples in Practice for 2.6 - Being fair and effectively managing my assumptions and personal beliefs sets the expectation that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • treating learners equitably — recognising that treating learners fairly does not always mean treating them equally |

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| Equity vs Equality | The terms equity and equality are sometimes used interchangeably however they have very different meanings. Equality is the provision of equal treatment, access and opportunity regardless of need. While equity recognises different groups may require different approaches to achieve the same outcome. | This TLRI two year project – <u>Teaching for Equity: How do we do it?</u> Explores how can we teach in ways that promote equitable learning outcomes and opportunities for each of our learners and identified 6 interconnected patterns of practice associated with positive learning outcomes for diverse learners. |
| Colour-blindness | Racial colour-blindness is the idea that ignoring or overlooking racial and ethnic differences promotes racial harmony. Failure or refusal to see and acknowledge difference makes it difficult to recognise the biases we have. In Aotearoa New Zealand, colour-blindness underpins a “one nation” discourse that is used to deny Māori the right to self-determination. It is a facade of racial neutrality that covertly perpetuates racism. | The <i>Code / Ngā Paerewa</i> sets out the importance of knowing where our learners come from and building on all that they bring with them to their learning. The Code examples in practice include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learning about the histories, heritage, language, identity, beliefs and culture of my learners and what is important to them • using opportunities in my teaching and leadership to affirm and draw on the cultural capital that all learners bring with them to their learning experience |
| Tone policing | Tone policing is used by those who have power and privilege to silence those who do not, by focussing on the tone of what is being said, rather than the content. It can be policing individuals for using tones that are too angry or aggressive when talking about racism and most often is connected to racist stereotyping, in that a white or Pākehā person’s anger might be seen as righteous, whereas indigenous and diverse people’s is seen as aggressive or dangerous. | Tone policing can show up in education in various ways, including the insistence that diverse learners speak in ways that better conform to standard English. |

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