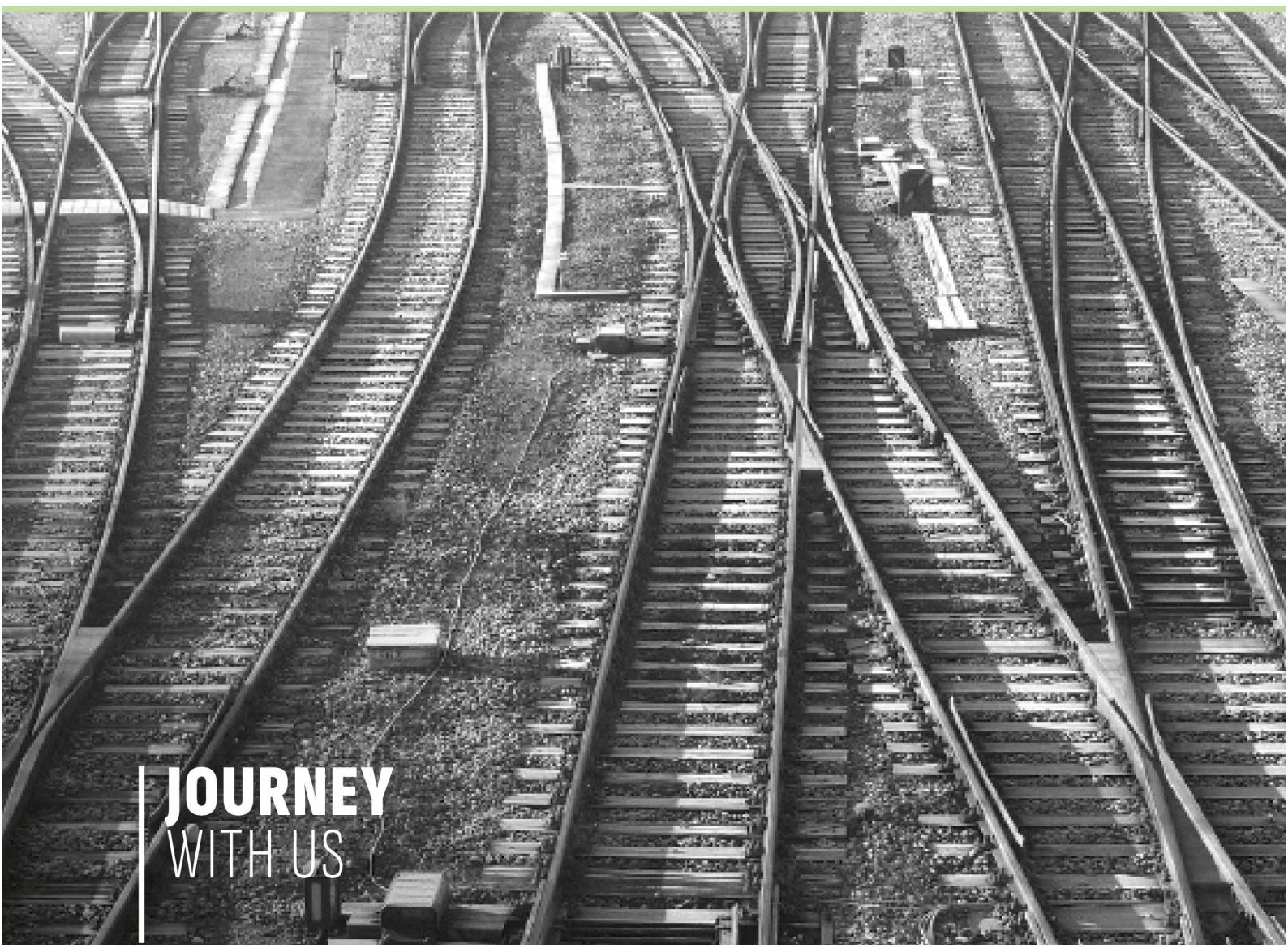




THE **PWI**

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND **INCLUSION POLICY**

Developing training materials



JOURNEY
WITH US

PWI Guide to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: Developing training materials

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Purpose

This document is intended for people who are designing and developing materials for training events on behalf of PWI. We recognise that many authors will already be familiar with most of the content. However as part of the PWI's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, we want to make sure all those leading PWI events have a level of understanding and support in this crucial area.

The diversity of the UK

In the UK population as a whole:

- 51% are female [source: [Office for National Statistics](#) (ONS)];
- Around 22% are disabled [source: [Scope](#)];
- 18% are from black, Asian or other minority ethnic backgrounds [source: [ONS](#) – England and Wales only];
- Around 46% give their religion as Christian, 11% other religions and 37% no religion [source: [ONS](#) – England and Wales only];
- Around 3% are gay, lesbian or bisexual [source: [ONS](#) – England and Wales only];
- Around 0.5% are trans [source: [ONS](#) – England and Wales only];
- Nearly 8% have a main language other than English or Welsh, and 1.6% cannot speak English well [source: [ONS](#) – England and Wales only].

We know that PWI members, and the rail industry workforce as a whole, do not fully represent this diversity, but at any PWI event there could be people from all of these groups present. People from any of these groups will also have:

- Differing levels of academic ability and achievement,

- Varied levels of experience, competence and motivation,
- Different personalities and behavioural preferences,
- Varying degrees of emotional intelligence.

Everyone should be able to feel comfortable and included at our events.

Designing training materials

Good training materials are the first step towards delivering excellent training. Lesson plans, visual aids and presentations need to be accurate, engaging and pitched at the right level for the audience. They also need to be accessible and inclusive and this section contains some tips on these aspects.

General

Some general points to bear in mind.

- People learn in different ways, so training should offer a mixture of delivery methods to suit different preferences – visual, aural and active.
- Images and video content should reflect the diversity of the audience and potential audience.
- Present material in a way that is sensitive to the diversity of the audience, avoiding stereotypes and assumptions – particularly avoiding assuming that everyone in a role is white and/or male.
- Use case studies, scenarios, handouts, videos and other resources that reflect a variety of cultures and traditions.
- Check that any videos are subtitled and any audio is high quality with a transcript available.
- Make sure assessments are fair and do not present barriers to learners, making reasonable adjustments as necessary.
- Offer open and anonymous ways for learners to give feedback on the training.

Training methods and media

There are many different methods of delivering training and it's important to select the most appropriate one(s) for the content you are covering. Longer courses should include a mixture of different methods. Methods may include:

- Trainer-led sessions
- Discussion
- Coaching
- Case study
- Demonstration
- Task or practical exercise
- Game or quiz
- Assignment.

After selecting methods, decide on the best media to deliver it, eg:

- Face-to-face (classroom or on site)
- Online session over Teams, Zoom etc
- eLearning
- Simulation, emulation and/or virtual reality.

Designing an effective blend of different methods and media for a training course enables differentiation. This is where the blend provides a diverse group of learners with different ways to learn, so regardless of their differences in culture, language, gender, motivation, ability or disability and personal interests, they all have the best chance of learning.

Assessments

Assessing learners' understanding of the material covered can bring up a range of issues, particularly those relating to reading and writing. This will particularly affect people with dyslexia and other neurodiverse conditions, or with specific learning difficulties. It's important learners are not disadvantaged if they have difficulties with skills that are not part of what you are aiming to assess, so consider whether reading and/or writing are key skills that the course should be testing.

Possible adjustments that can be made in assessments include:

- Giving additional time during knowledge assessments for learners with reading challenges.
- Providing a transparent coloured overlay or different coloured paper during an assessment – check that the colour of the paper provided is helpful to individual learner.
- Allowing a choice between using a computer and hand-writing answers.
- Providing larger print assessment materials (but preferably not simply an enlarged photocopy, which could present clarity and pagination issues).
- Offering a scribe to read assessment questions and write learners' answers for them.
- Alternatively, offering a screen reader and speech-to-text software.

Evaluation and feedback

It is always worthwhile to ask learners for their feedback at the end of a course or event. Questions should allow for feedback on areas such as:

- Whether the training environment felt inclusive,
- How much learners felt encouraged to engage and contribute,
- Whether anyone felt there were barriers to learning,
- Whether course materials and handouts were readable and useful,
- Whether the mixture of methods and media used was appropriate,
- Whether the physical arrangements (room, refreshments etc) were satisfactory for everyone.

Writing and language

The language used in training materials should be accessible to everyone on the course. This includes

Plain English

It's important that training materials are easy to read and understood. They should allow for different levels of academic achievement. Using plain English can help remove potential barriers to learning.

The 10 most important principles of plain English are:

1. Think of your reader's needs.
2. Organise your content well.
3. Write in a natural style, as if you were talking to the reader.
4. Keep sentences short.

5. Use active verbs.
6. Be specific rather than general.
7. Cut all redundant words and phrases.
8. Use simpler words rather than complex words.
9. Cut down on jargon.
10. Edit vigorously.

There are tools to help with reviewing text – see the “Further resources” section.

Neutral language

When reviewing your training material, ask yourself questions such as:

- Are the pronouns “he” and “she” used a similar number of times?
- Are racial and ethnic role models appropriately used and not stereotyped?
- Do you need to check terminology for any groups – national origins, race, disability, gender identity etc?

As far as possible, avoid using either “he” or “she” to refer to a general person. Sometimes this means rewriting a sentence to make it clearer. For example:

Rearrange to omit the pronoun:

- ✗ “The average student may end up spending too much of his money on software.”
- ✓ “The average student may end up spending too much money on software.”

Replace third-person pronouns with second-person pronouns:

- ✗ “He/she must clean up the meeting room at the end of each day.”
- ✓ “You must clean up the meeting room at the end of each day.”

Use plurals:

- ✗ “The manager or his assistant...”
- ✓ “Managers or their assistants...”

Change a nominal to a verbal expression:

- ✗ “A person who has in his possession such prohibited substances will have broken the law.”
- ✓ “A person who possesses such prohibited substances will have broken the law.”

Some terms to avoid, and possible replacements, are as follows. But language is changing all the time, so if you have any doubt about a term, check it or find an alternative.

Avoid	Use
Chairman	Chair
Foreman	Supervisor, team leader
Signalman	Signaller
Manhole	Access hatch
Manpower	Workforce, staff, human resources
Cleaning lady	Cleaner
The girls in the office	Office staff
Male nurse	Nurse
Woman doctor	Doctor

Avoid	Use
The disabled, handicapped, crippled	Disabled people
Able-bodied person, normal person	Non-disabled person
Midget	Dwarf, short person
Suffers from...	Has...
Wheelchair-bound	Wheelchair user
Retarded, mentally handicapped	Learning disabled, intellectual disability

Avoid	Use
The deaf, the blind	Deaf people, hearing impaired people, blind people
The elderly, geriatric	Mature people, older people
Kids	Children, teenagers, young people
Girls, boys (referring to someone over 18)	Young adults

Avoid	Use
Homosexual	Gay, lesbian
Boyfriend, girlfriend	Partner
Minority group, visible minority	Minority ethnic group
Coloured person, person of colour	Black, Asian, Black British, Asian British
Half-caste, half-breed	Mixed race, dual heritage

Disabilities and other specific needs

Neurodiversity and specific learning differences

The terms “neurodiversity” and “specific learning difficulties” (SpLDs) describe differences in the way people learn, perceive the world and process information.

Common neurodiverse conditions include dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, ADHD and autism (which includes Asperger’s syndrome – a term no longer used in the medical world). People with these conditions may be affected to a greater or lesser degree. Many people with these conditions also have SpLDs. Some also have generalised intellectual disabilities, but those people are less likely to be in employment.

It’s worth considering these conditions when developing training materials. The language used and the ways in which material is laid out can make a significant difference to how well some learners with these conditions understand it.

As a starting point, here is an outline of the various conditions. Remember every individual is different and not everyone with the same diagnosis will find the same things helpful.

Dyslexia

- This primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent reading and spelling. Other characteristics include difficulty in verbal memory and verbal processing speed.
- Dyslexic people tend to be visual and practical, hands-on learners. Sitting for long periods just listening is not their strong point.
- Dyslexic people also tend to be big picture thinkers, but may be less adept at processing and remembering detail.

Dyscalculia

- This affects a person’s ability to understand and manipulate numbers.
- Like dyslexia, it can be caused by visual perception. It results in problems with mathematics, time, measurement, etc.
- Dyscalculia is not rare and many of those who have dyslexia or dyspraxia may also have this difficulty.

Dyspraxia

- Also known as developmental co-ordination disorder or DCD.

- This is an impairment or immaturity of the organisation of movement. Associated problems can be found in language, perception and thought.
- Between 7 and 10% of the population are affected by dyspraxia and up to 3% severely.

Dysgraphia

- This is a deficiency in the ability to write, primarily in terms of handwriting.
- It can also create issues with coherence, the storing process of written words and processing the letters in those words.

ADHD and ADD

- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a broad term, and the condition varies from person to person. Where the hyperactivity element is weak, the condition may be known as attention deficit disorder or ADD.
- People with ADHD or ADD have lapses of concentration and attention, which are often worse when under stress.
- They may develop a range of coping mechanisms which may camouflage or disguise some of the symptoms. Even so they are likely to be prone to impulsive behaviour or expressions of frustration.

Autism (including Asperger's syndrome)

- Autism is impairment in social interaction and imagination, impaired verbal and non-verbal communication (particularly abstract concepts), and restricted and/or repetitive behaviour.
- Speech is often affected, with some autistic people talking very little or not at all, while others talk far more than most people.
- Many autistic people are hyper- or hypo-sensitivity to certain stimuli (noise, light, etc). They may exhibit repetitive movements known as 'stimming', which can help them concentrate.
- Autistic people vary very widely in how much the condition affects daily life.
- Autism is more common than previously thought, and affects at least 1% of the population. However autistic people (with or without a diagnosis) often develop a range of coping mechanisms to manage or hide symptoms or avoid difficult situations.
- Autistic people who do not have an intellectual disability and are able to develop effective coping mechanisms may not be obviously different from neurotypical people. However they may face substantial stress in trying to 'pass as normal' which can lead to mental health issues such as depression or anxiety.
- Coping mechanisms may be less effective in a training environment. Learners may find it difficult to tell people what they need or how they feel, or to understand what other people think. Alternatively, they may be very direct and frank, sometimes interrupting other trainees. Some will prefer more literal language and less use of figures of speech or sarcasm, although this is by no means universal.

Tips that may help

A key feature of making training accessible to people with neurodiverse conditions, or any other needs, is to have a conversation with the learner and ask them what they would find helpful.

- Learners may find it difficult to access training materials that include:
 - Over-busy presentation slides,
 - Flashing or fast-moving images (particularly when the moving image is not the current focus of the training),
 - Anything that is implied but not stated clearly,
 - Unfamiliar and unexplained metaphors,

- Material meant to be taken humorously or understood as irony or sarcasm.
- Use a variety of methods, styles and media to maintain interest, but not in a way that presents surprises and uncertainty.
- Assessments are likely to be particularly affected and adjustments may be needed (see section on “Assessments” above).

Selected other needs

Under the Equality Act 2012, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities. Here, “substantial” means more than minor or trivial, and “long-term” means 12 months or more. This can cover a very wide range of conditions, with a correspondingly wide range of effects.

A few types of disability, and adjustments that may be useful for people who have them, are as follows.

Sight loss and blindness

Materials should be made available to learners electronically if at all possible, and should be laid out such that screen readers can read them out. Visual materials should have “alternative text” provided, giving a brief description of the picture or video which screen readers will read.

Assessments may need to be adjusted to avoid relying on reading printed materials and writing answers by hand.

Hearing loss and deafness

Again, materials should be made available to learners electronically if at all possible. All audio material (including videos) should have subtitles or transcripts – preferably subtitles (or captions) as it is difficult to follow both a video and a transcript at the same time. Don’t rely on automatic captioning, but check the captions to make sure they are accurate and that they don’t obscure important parts of the visuals.

Many people who have been profoundly deaf all their lives use British Sign Language. It is worth bearing in mind that this is a language in its own right and such people may think of English as very much a second language.

Further resources

Fairness, inclusion and respect

The Supply Chain Sustainability School toolkit for the construction industry provides a range of free resources: www.SupplyChainSchool.co.uk/topics/fir

Neurodiversity

The TSSA (Transport Salaried Staffs’ Association) provides guidance on neurodiversity in the workplace: www.tssa.org.uk/about-tssa/what-we-do/equality-diversity/neurodiversity

Plain English

There are numerous online guides to using plain English and tools to assist with checking readability.

- Plain English Campaign guides: www.PlainEnglish.co.uk/free-guides.html and text checker: www.PlainEnglish.co.uk/drivel-defence.html
- Skills You Need: www.SkillsYouNeed.com/write/plain-english.html
- The First Word readability test: TheFirstWord.co.uk/ReadabilityTest
- Gunning fog index: www.ReadabilityFormulas.com/gunning-fog-readability-formula.php or gunning-fog-index.com

British Dyslexia Association

Guidance on reasonable adjustments related to dyslexia: www.BDAdyslexia.org.uk/advice/employers

Useful apps: BDANewTechnologies.wordpress.com/what-technology/small-portable-devices

Tinted paper and overlays

Crossbow Education: www.CrossbowEducation.com

The sunflower lanyard scheme

Hidden Disabilities store: hiddendisabilitiesstore.com

Disabilities and the Equality Act 2010

Government guidance: www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010

Royal National Institute for Deaf People

Deaf awareness: RNID.org.uk/information-and-support/deaf-awareness

Speech-to-text smartphone apps: RNID.org.uk/information-and-support/technology-and-products/speech-to-text-smartphone-apps

Creating accessible documents

AbilityNet guidance: abilitynet.org.uk/factsheets/creating-accessible-documents-0

Microsoft guidance: support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/create-accessible-office-documents-868ecfcd-4f00-4224-b881-a65537a7c155

Government guidance: www.gov.uk/guidance/publishing-accessible-documents