

UNCONSCIOUS BIAS STATEMENT

Joint Council for Cosmetic Practitioners Unconscious Bias Statement

Introduction

The Joint Council for Cosmetic Practitioners is committed to fostering a culture of inclusion and care where members of the public and all our stakeholders and registrants feel supported and experiences a strong sense of belonging. As part of this commitment, our team is actively working to mitigate the effects of unconscious bias, along with encouraging all of colleagues to meaningfully engage with this issue.

Our Position on Unconscious Bias

The JCCP recognises that how a person thinks can be influenced by their life experiences and sometimes they have beliefs and views about other people that might not be considered by others to be right or reasonable. This is known as 'unconscious bias' and includes when a person thinks:

- better of someone because they believe they are alike
- less of someone because that person is different to them, for example, they might be of a different race, religion, age or sexual preference

We acknowledge that the majority of people, including health care professionals and aesthetic practitioners have unconscious or implicit biases. These can affect the way we interact with colleagues, staff and patients, and even influence our decision making regarding day to day clinical practice, the delivery of education and training, how we select and appoint staff and may also influence how organisations, such as the JCCP approve the admission of Registrants or Education and Training providers to our registers.

Unconscious bias is the immediate judgement of something, or someone, based on our past experience, background and culture. It is instinctive rather than a rational thought process and occurs almost instantaneously on encountering someone new. This bias can then influence our thoughts, beliefs and behaviour towards that person.

When we first meet someone, we subconsciously categorise them based on, for example, their gender, age, skin colour, accent, profession, sexual orientation. We then use preconceived ideas of their intrinsic characteristics and form an immediate opinion about the person. Most people have unconscious biases, no matter how strongly they consciously oppose discrimination or prejudice. We tend to feel positively about someone who is similar to us, and negatively about those we perceive as 'different'. These assumptions then effect the relationship we have with that person, including how close we will stand to them, and how often we make eye contact.

The term unconscious bias encompasses several types of bias such as gender bias, confirmation bias, age bias, and affinity bias, to name a few. It can be both positive and negative, as we may favour or disapprove of someone based on whether we feel they fit into 'our group' (namely, whether we feel they share similar characteristics to us).

This means a person could make a decision influenced by false beliefs or assumptions or by categorising someone through the practice of 'stereotyping'. Everyone can think in a way that involves unconscious bias at some point, but it is important to be aware of it and not let it affect behaviour or decisions. One of our key expectations that all persons within, or who work in partnership with the JCCP should be aware of unconscious bias and of the impact this might have on others and on the impact this might have on the implementation of our published Statement on Equality, Inclusivity and Diversity (2021).

This Statement sets out the JCCP's commitment to equality, diversity and its legal duties under UK law and provides an over-arching statement on our provisions and arrangements with regards to equality, inclusivity, and diversity. This Policy advises that:

'The JCCP seeks to promote equality of opportunity, to welcome and encourage inclusivity and to encourage and celebrate difference. To realise these core principles, the JCCP shall exercise no discrimination on the grounds of political opinion, age, race/skin colour, disability, ethnic or national origin, gender, marital status, race, religion,

or sexual orientation in the admission of members to its registers, or the appointment of Trustees, Committee Members, and employees, or generally, in the execution of any of its Objects as laid down by the JCCP Articles of Association/Constitution.’ In accordance with its Articles of Association and legal responsibilities, the JCCP is committed to creating, promoting, and maintaining inclusive learning and working culture in which all members of its ‘stakeholder community’ are treated fairly, where diversity and inclusivity is valued, and discrimination challenged’.

The JCCP has also recognizes in its Mission Statement that we seek as all times to be recognised as a ‘listening organisation’. In our mission statement was also explicitly affirm our commitment to equality of opportunity, inclusion and diversity and to operate in an open, fair and objectively informed manner.

Our Aims

The JCCP aims to raise awareness of the potential biases and cognitive shortcuts that may negatively affect decision-making and behaviour that might affect all areas of our activity. The intent is to seek to reduce both explicit and implicit bias towards members of any particular group (or community) that share characteristics protected under law and change behaviour. Whilst we recognise that there is no recognised (or proven) way of assuring the quality of unconscious bias through the provision of formal training, we will ensure that raising awareness about unconscious bias is included in all our equality, diversity and inclusivity training events. We will also ensure that this policy statement is brought to the attention of our Fitness to Practice Team members, during their training sessions and whenever they meet to consider a potential complaint against a Registrant. Members of the JCCP’s Practitioner Register Committee and Complaints Teams will also be reminded of the statement at the commencement of each of their schedule meetings.

This Statement should be read in conjunction with the [JCCP Statement on Equality, Inclusivity and Diversity \(2021\)](#).