

Funded by: AcSS & ESRC Project:
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion 2025-
2026

Developing academic leadership with an EDI focus

British Association of Applied Linguistics (BAAL)

UK Association for Language Testing and Assessment (UKALTA)

What is our vision?

- To bring together two learned societies with a common and overlapping interest in applied linguistics and language education
- To identify and explore the key issues around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) facing our members and subject areas, through relevant input, facilitated discussion and the sharing of ideas and experience
- To contextualise and place EDI issues at the heart of academic leadership in our respective disciplines

What did we do?

- Planned and delivered **two EDI leadership workshops** (one hybrid, one in-person) during our annual conference (BAAL) and as a pre-conference workshop (UKALTA) in the last quarter of 2024
- Both workshops followed a similar structure and timings, comprising a series of short, focused talks by participants on EDI-related aspects followed by small group, facilitated discussions
- Presentation and discussion content were differentiated according to our respective disciplinary focus and audience (i.e. *applied linguistics* and *language teaching & assessment*)

BAAL: applied linguistics

- **Presentation topics** included: EDI policies in assessment, non-visible disabilities, language in EDI discourses, EDI leadership through coalition, inclusive language policy, EDI and international students
- **Group discussion** centred around the current challenges or problems in how EDI is handled by academic leadership and initiatives or solutions that have worked in the past and are worth sharing or taking forward.

UKALTA: language testing and assessment

- **Presentation topics** focused on EDI leadership in response to test-takers' socio-economic status and disabilities, and in global assessment contexts, as well as the use of technology to implement EDI-related research
- **Group discussion** centred around a set of EDI-related questions focused on: the contextually bound nature of EDI; universal design principles; 'hidden' EDI issues; tensions between 'standardisation' and 'personalisation'; EAP assessment; technology; and assessment literacy.

How did we do it? (tips and techniques 1)

- Much of the high-level planning was done jointly through regular online meetings of the BAAL/UKALTA working group, and members of the working group and from both associations attended and participated in each other's workshops
- Open calls for speakers were announced through our respective mailing lists, and abstracts were evaluated to ensure a diversity of topics and speakers; in some cases, the open call was supplemented with an approach to invited speakers to ensure adequate coverage of a particular issue/s

How did we do it? (tips and techniques 2)

- Registration was managed as part of/alongside the normal conference registration procedures
- Working group members led and took notes during the facilitated group discussions using shared online files hosted on Google Docs
- Feedback from attendees was gathered immediately following the event via an online feedback form; this was analysed to gauge impact and to inform similar future events

What did we learn from participants about EDI in our fields? (1)

- Institutional EDI policies are often fragmented and overlook key areas such as assessment and student motivation
- EDI is frequently treated as a compliance exercise or a trend, rather than embedded into everyday practices, sidelining minoritised colleagues who are often tasked with leading initiatives without credit for their labour
- Definitions of EDI vary widely, leading to inconsistent implementation across institutions (e.g. equity vs equality)
- Language is not yet a protected characteristic, amplifying inequities for international students navigating visa restrictions, publishing biases, and institutional policies requiring them to “prove” they haven’t used generative AI for language editing

What did we learn from participants about EDI in our fields? (2)

- Despite the challenges, promising practices include inclusive teaching approaches, such as offering subtitles and additional time in class for students who may not disclose learning difficulties
- Participatory frameworks, encouraging co-questioning, co-authoring, and co-presenting, were seen as vital for redistributing power and bringing underrepresented voices to the academic table
- Celebrating incremental achievements was recognised as a way to sustain morale and momentum in what is often slow-moving work
- There is a role for learned societies in advocating for change, providing spaces for discussion and the sharing of lived experiences, and funding research

What did participants think?

- Participants really liked the format of the small group discussion and the opportunity to discuss the talks as well as their own lived experiences
- They appreciated the range of voices, topics and experiences presented, and the short-talk format
- They liked the opportunities to learn from colleagues and to share experiences
- They felt the workshops were successful in providing an overview of the current EDI situation, raising awareness and cultivating energy
- They would have liked a clearer focus on 'what to do next', greater consideration of accessibility and inclusivity at the event, as well as more time for discussion

What are the long-term benefits?

- The project re-energised EDI activities within both learned societies, significantly raising the profile of our EDI work and attracting interest from new, diverse and global audiences
- Synergy between the two associations proved valuable in consolidating interdisciplinary collaboration, broadening our reach, and helping us to learn more about each other's field of activity as well as building good working relationships going forward
- Both societies have strengthened their skills in leading EDI activities and developed valuable experience in addressing sensitive topics effectively

The organising team

BAAL

Zhu Hua, Caroline Tagg, Alex Ho-Cheong Leung

UKALTA

Lynda Taylor, Sathena Chan

To find out more, please contact the BAAL chair
(baalchair@baal.org) or UKALTA president (info@ukalta.org)



BAAL/UKALTA EDI Leadership Workshop

(Funded by Academy of Social Sciences and ESRC EDI initiative)
Thursday 6th September, 2024

On-site: University of Essex, Colchester Campus, EBS-Essex Business School, 1.1

Online: Zoom link: <https://essex-university.zoom.us/j/95789619700>

Meeting ID: 957 8961 9700 [Please join in with your full name and affiliation.]

12:30-13:20 Lunch * (Ivor Crewe Auditorium B)

13:30-13:40 Welcome and Introduction (Zhu Hua and Lynda Taylor)

13:40-13:55 Dialoguing

- Laurence ~~Bassigba~~, Theatre of the Oppressed

13:55-14:25 Unpacking EDI

- Carla Pastorino Campos: JEDI policies in assessments
- Catherine Walter (on-line): Non-visible disabilities
- Hannah Gibson, Elvis BeGue & Joyce Anku: Language in EDI discourses
- Alia Amir (on-line): DEI, history and colonial discourses

14:25-14:55 Exploring Leadership for EDI

- ~~Tahereh~~ Chai: EDI leadership as advisor
- Janine Knight (on-line): EDI leadership as teacher trainer and activist
- Elena Anna Maria Gandini: EDI leadership for change-making
- Yvonne Foley: EDI leadership through coalition

14:55-15:25 Showcasing EDI projects in global contexts

- Md ~~Mogees~~ Hossain: Inclusive language policy
- Xuejia Shen: Translanguaging and Educational equity
- Mutinta ~~Masowe~~ (on-line): Grassroot EDI initiatives
- Paweł Szudarski: EDI and international students

15:25-15:40 Break

15:40-16:30 Connecting: EDI Leadership Challenges and Solutions Roundtable

Discussion questions and response via: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1U5vNw-LQzQvJ-zNvYWFvEpyUQKCVgz35?usp=drive_link

16:30-16:35 Wrapping up (Caroline Tagg and Alex Ho-Cheong Leung)

17:45-19:00 Drinks Reception * (Ivor Crewe Auditorium B)

*Hosted together with the Conference attendees.

Please complete the Feedback Form at the end of the Workshop:
<https://forms.office.com/e/paC0bRzHMy>

LTF2024



BAAL/UKALTA

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Workshop LTF2024

With support from ~~AcSS~~/ESRC

22 November 2024, 1pm-5pm, Bedford Campus, G0.12

13:00 - 13:15 **Introduction** (UKALTA & BAAL)

13:15 - 14:45 **Unpacking and exploring EDI Leadership roles and issues in our contexts**

13:15 - 13:35 **EDI Leadership in response to test-takers' socio-economic status**
Nahal Khabbazzashi (CRELLA, University of Bedfordshire), Parvaneh Tavakoli (University of Reading)

13:35 - 13:55 **EDI Leadership in language and discourse about learners with disability**
Nathaniel Owen (Oxford University Press)

13:55 - 14:15 **EDI Leadership for change-making in a local HE context**
Elena Gandini (University of Central Lancashire)

14:15 - 14:35 **EDI Leadership in global assessment contexts**
Gemma Bellhouse (British Council)

14:35 - 14:45 **Follow-up Q&A**

14:45-15:00 **Refreshment break**

15:00-15:45 **Taking a lead in implementing EDI-related research using technology**
Nicola Latimer (CRELLA, University of Bedfordshire)

15:45-16:45 **Roundtable discussion in facilitated groups** (UKALTA & BAAL)

16:45-17:00 **Close** (UKALTA)

