



Promoting equality and diversity at  
RCEM conferences and study days

## Introduction

We all share a collective responsibility to promote excellence in equality and diversity considerations. This is an explicit requirement of the GMC, but more importantly it is something that all emergency clinicians should value, demonstrate and promote.

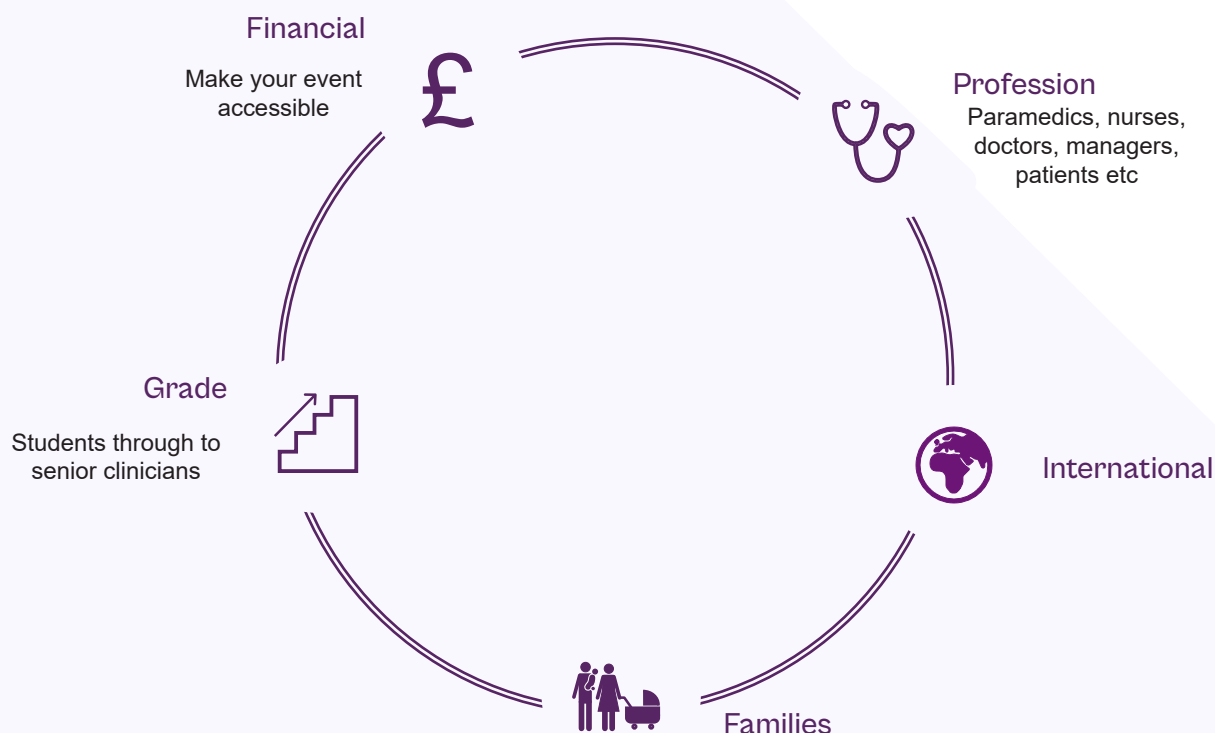
One visible aspect of an organisation's promotion of equality and diversity (E&D) values is the topics, speakers and accessibility of organised events. We believe that by explicitly considering E&D issues at conferences and events we will be able to reflect the broad demographic of our Members, Fellows, co-workers and patients. My personal belief is that Emergency Medicine is one of the more diverse, fair, equal and diverse specialities. It is important that our events reflect this.

This brief guide, in the form of a top tips approach is designed to help promote E&D values at RCEM events. Further information is available from the RCEM events team or follow the links at the bottom of the page to other online resources.

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CPD Director, The Royal College of Emergency Medicine

## Demonstrating diversity

Our events should demonstrate diversity in the following ways:





## Diversity at RCEM Events

There are specific characteristics laid down in the Equality Act and these are listed at the end of this document. Within RCEM we also need to think about other aspects of diversity such as colleagues in nursing, paramedicine and allied health professionals. In broad terms our conferences should reflect those people we work with.

The following considerations are not designed to be a checklist. They aim to make event organisers consider a wide range of issues so that all delegates feel welcome and included in our events. Some events may not be able to address all areas described, but these areas should remain ongoing aspirations for all events.

### Families

Ensure that your event is accessible to current and future parents (pregnancy), and those with babies. Make it clear that they are welcome and provide areas to feed/change infants. Consider reducing costs for parents ineligible for study leave monies whilst on parental leave (although many parents in national training programs will still be eligible for study leave funds whilst on parental leave, others may not).

### Cost

Keep costs to a reasonable and fair level. Consider providing reduced rates for those in training, junior grades, allied health professionals and others without access to institutional funding.

### Accessibility

Consider the needs of delegates who may have physical, psychological, health and financial barriers to accessing the event.



## Speaker selection

Speakers are the most visible part of a conference and should reflect the audience, Members and Fellows of the conference. Whilst race and gender are perhaps the most obvious ways in which a conference can illustrate diversity, we would encourage organisers to think more broadly into other protected characteristics, geographies and professions.

It is recognised that smaller events with a handful of speakers are likely to show less diversity as compared to larger events. However, small events should still aim to demonstrate the benefits of a diverse faculty.

## Speaker support

New speakers and those unfamiliar with emergency medicine may struggle to find an appropriate style, complexity and engagement with an emergency medicine audience. Certain groups, such as speakers who are less fluent in English, or those attending from a different educational culture may find it difficult to engage with a UK audience. It is worth noting that such speakers often in themselves bring diversity and interest to our events and we should encourage their attendance.

Organisers should identify speakers who may need additional support in advance. Support may consist of a range of resources such as providing guides for speakers, appointing speaker coaches, or pre-reviewing content. The role of the organiser is to support the speakers in delivering the best possible educational experience.

### ✓ Top tips

- Avoid panels that are clearly lack diversity (e.g. the #Manel)
- Keynote speakers should also represent diversity
- Don't gender topics (trauma is NOT a male topic, paediatrics is NOT a female topic etc.)
- Encourage patient representation at conferences
- Pregnant/nursing/disability/parenting are no barrier to a speaker invitation
- Look for new speakers and avoid the same old faces at conferences
- Encourage new speakers to pitch or bid for speaker slots





## Protected characteristics

In the UK it is against the law to discriminate against someone because of:

- **Age**
- **Disability**
- **Gender reassignment**
- **Marriage and civil partnership**
- **Pregnancy and maternity**
- **Race**
- **Religion or belief**
- **Sex**
- **Sexual orientation**

## Resources

### **EventBrite**

How to run an inclusive event

### **Diversity Charter**

Tips for organisers

### **Are there too few women presenting at emergency medicine conferences?**

Carley S, Carden R, Riley R, et al.  
Emergency Medicine Journal, August 2016

### **St Emlyn's Blog**

Gender at EM conferences

### **UK Equality Act 2010**

### **FeminEM**

Speakers Bureau

## Final thoughts

RCEM is a diverse college, with a diverse membership that serves a diverse population. Our educational events should reflect this. Organisers should be able to demonstrate how they promote diversity at RCEM events.