

What is it really like to be a minority researcher?

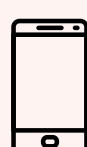
The findings of the recent [MRS survey](#) into diversity, inclusion and equality (DI&E) demonstrate that discrimination and inappropriate behaviour at work are still commonplace. We've asked a researcher who is a member of a number of minoritised groups to keep a diary of a typical working day so we can understand the issues from her perspective.



7:30 am

Appointment with my GP

I've a physical condition and some ongoing health issues that need regular check-ups but I've had to wait weeks to get an early morning appointment so I don't miss any work, as my company isn't supportive about taking time off for appointments.



9:00 am

Call with some clients

There are a couple of people on the call with non-British backgrounds and accents, so you have to make an effort to listen carefully. Afterwards, one of my colleagues makes a negative comment.



11:00am

The meeting is running over

My manager knows I have an online therapy appointment to help with stress and anxiety but I still feel uncomfortable having to leave the meeting, as taking time off for therapy is looked down on.



13:00 pm

Go to lunch with colleagues

They are all laughing about some TV shows that they grew up with but I don't know them as I wasn't born in this country. I feel a bit left out.



15:00 pm

Going through CVs and LinkedIn profiles for a new exec role

Graduates from the top universities are preferred; this contributes to a lack of social diversity in this company. As we are looking through the profiles, my manager makes a joke about one of the applicants "looking gay." I despair.



18:30 pm

At home, clearing up after dinner

People from my office are out together in a bar - they've put the pictures on Facebook. It's so hard to build good relationships at work because I can't often go out to socialise with them.



8:00 am

Time to drop off my son at nursery

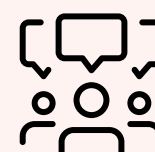
I'm trying to get a balance between work and childcare but I often feel like I am missing out both in the office and at home. I didn't get a promotion because it depended on working long hours. My priority is my family, but it's like I only have half a career.



10:00 am

Meeting with clients

One of the clients tells a joke that borders on racist. Do I bring it up? Or just let it go? Last time I called out a racist comment, I was told that I was mistaken. The company has a diversity policy so some people believe that this means that there is no racism.



12:00 pm

Another client meeting

I attend with my younger colleague who happens to be white and male, and who reports to me. The client assumes he is my boss. Perhaps it is because I look young for my age.



14:00 pm

Planning the annual performance reviews for my team

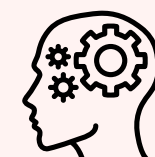
Typically, performance reviews pick up on weaknesses and the only way to progress is by improving those weaknesses. However this doesn't make sense for one member of my team who is on the autistic spectrum; she has fantastic creative research and analysis skills, but struggles with some aspects of team management. One size definitely does not fit all.



16:00 pm

It's my contractual time to leave

Walk past my manager's desk, as always at this time. He makes a point of checking his watch. As always.



10:00 pm

Finally a chance to relax and reflect on the day

So many micro-aggressions, so many challenges that are baked in to the structure of working life. How many of the things that happened today are actually due to structural prejudice as opposed to ignorant or thoughtless individuals, bad managers or personal clashes? Part of the struggle is not knowing and being on my guard at all times. It's exhausting. I'm seriously thinking of leaving and setting up on my own.

What can you do to improve diversity, inclusion and equality?

Of course, our researcher is fictional – hopefully nobody would encounter so much discrimination in one day – but these types of incident are very real. All of the scenarios in this 'day in the life' have been inspired by the responses to the [MRS survey](#). For more information, and for ways that you can help, read the full article [here](#).